



Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

Date of Production: March 2022 (Information current as of 3/15/2022)

This documentation is provided by Michigan DNR staff as a supplement for Western UPCAC Council members. Please email or call with any questions.

Upper Peninsula Field Deputy Update – Stacy Haughey

CO Cody Smith - District 1

CO Cody Smith's willingness to help out fishermen when he comes in contact with them is **AMAZING!** He was very generous of his time and money to locate several lures for an elderly fisherman in the first paragraph. **THANK YOU CO Smith!**



CO Cody Smith continued to check anglers on both Huron and Keweenaw Bay. Throughout the week, CO Smith saw many anglers with mostly whitefish in their possession. While talking to a local elderly angler, he discovered the angler was having trouble finding his favorite Swedish Pimple that he had used over the years to catch lake trout. CO Smith asked the angler what color, pattern and size the lures he liked were. Roughly a week after talking to the angler, CO Smith sourced both of the angler's favorite lures direct from the company online. CO Smith found the angler locally and gifted 3 Swedish Pimples to the angler with hopes of catching some quality fish on them.

CO Cody Smith was checking anglers on Keweenaw Bay when he approached a young angler. As CO Smith approached the angler, he discovered they were fighting a fish. CO Smith asked the angler what they had on as they were observed for roughly 15 minutes prior to arrival. The angler stated it was a large brown trout. The angler was fishing in a 6-inch hole so CO Smith asked if they thought it would fit through the hole. The angler was confident that it would. After several minutes of continuing to tire the fish out, it was observed through the clear ice. Both CO Smith and the angler then realized it was larger than expected and that it would not fit through the 6-inch hole. CO Smith retrieved the angler's auger and ice spud from their jet sled and got to work. CO Smith drilled two more holes forming a triangle with the hole the angler was fishing in. He then used the spud to bust the remaining ice between the three holes. After clearing the ice from the hole, the angler was able to land the nearly 30-inch-long male brown trout. The angler recognized the fish as one that was caught a few days previous by another angler and posted on social media. After a quick picture the fish was released to be caught another day. The side-by-side pictures from the angler's fish and the one he saw on social media confirmed that it was indeed the same fish due to split fins, matching scars on its side and lack of adipose fin.



Upcoming Wolf Management Advisory Council Meetings

Mar. 15, 2022	Work Session: 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Kewadin Casino 2186 Shunk Rd. Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783 989-539-2346
Mar. 16, 2022	Meeting: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	
Apr. 7, 2022	9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center 104 Conservation Drive Roscommon MI 48653 989-821-6200
May 17, 2022	9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Marquette Township Community Center 1000 Commerce Drive Marquette, MI 49855

March NRC Meeting Summary – Ed Golder, Public Information Officer

The Natural Resources Commission met at Lansing Community College on March 10, 2022. Major actions taken:

The NRC approved:

- New furbearer regulations for bobcats. This included a slight change to the department's previous recommendations. This change was presented by Adam Bump of the Wildlife Division at today's meeting prior to the commission's vote.
- Migratory game bird hunting seasons and managed waterfowl regulations for 2022.

Director Dan Eichinger approved:

- The results of the Jan. 18, 2022 Oil and Gas Lease Auction. The department offered some 17,438 acres for auction and some 6,901 acres received successful bids. The auction raised \$173,507 for the State Parks Endowment Fund.
- Three land transactions. Details can be found in the NRC agenda.

Committee of the Whole, Director's Report

Kerry Heckman from the Forest Resources Division presented a Partners in Conservation Award to Thomas Schupbach of Gladwin. Tom gifted to the people of the state a 40-acre parcel of land he had recently purchased in Roscommon County. The property is completely surrounded by state forest land and contains a portion of a creek that is a tributary to the South Branch of the Au Sable River. He subsequently purchased a 35-acre parcel of land with extensive frontage on the South Branch of the Au Sable. He donated that land to the state as well. Thanks to Tom we now have an additional 75 acres of prime public land. Tom has also cooperated in the department's surrogate sow program, giving wildlife staff access to his property for that purpose. Tom was recognized for his generosity in gifting his land and cooperating in wildlife management.

Seth Herbst from the Fisheries Division updated the commission on lake trout harvest and regulations in Northern Lake Huron related to the 2000 Consent Decree, an agreement among federal, state and tribal governments. Under the Decree, if either the state or tribes exceed agreed-upon harvest levels by more than 15 percent in one year, the amount of the overage is deducted from the next year's harvest limit and the responsible party is required to take management action. During the 2021 fishing season, the state exceeded its harvest limit by 20 percent. The DNR is preparing regulation options that will fulfill the Consent Decree requirements.

Chad Stewart in the Wildlife Division informed the commission about proposed 2022-2023 elk regulations, starting with the latest elk survey estimates. The department's elk management plan sets a goal of having 500 to 900 elk in Michigan. The 2022 survey just completed estimates there are 1,277 elk in Michigan. This is a slight increase compared to previous population estimates, but given statistical confidence intervals there isn't a significant change in the elk population over the last three surveys. The department is recommending for 2022-2023 a license quota structure similar to what was used in 2020-2021. The department is also recommending doing away with a provisional January hunt period, which has been available as needed in the event other hunt periods didn't meet management goals. However, the January hunt period hasn't been used since 2008 and in any case there is very little time to prepare a hunt if we do use it. The department can adjust quotas in the subsequent year if needed, Chad said.

Cody Norton of the Wildlife Division presented the 2022 bear population trend analysis. In the Upper Peninsula, the department estimates there are 9,673 bears, up 13 percent since 2012. The department's goal in the U.P. is to continue to increase the bear population by allowing a slight increase in harvest. In the Northern Lower Peninsula, the bear population is estimated at 2,663 bears, up 88 percent since 2012. The department's goal in this part of the state is to slow population growth to eventually achieve a stable population.

The commission also received a report on legislation affecting the department (see below).

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 the NRC Assistant at **NEW NUMBER! 517-599-1067** or email: 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 NRC webpage (www.michigan.gov/NRC).

March 2022 Legislative Updates – Legislative & Legal Affairs Office

HB 4078 – Allow an Individual to Possess a Loaded Firearm in or on a Vehicle when on Private Property – Rep. LaFave:

The bill amends the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow an individual to possess or transport a loaded firearm in or upon a vehicle, including an ATV or UTV, if the individual owns the private land or is accompanied by or has permission of the owner or lessee of the private land.

- The bill was reported with recommendation from the House Committee on Military, Veterans and Homeland Security and the House Committee on Judiciary. The bill is currently awaiting a vote on the House floor.
- The Administration is opposed to this legislation.

HB 4149 (H-1) – Modify Certain Penalties for Certain Fishing Violations – Rep. Damoose: The bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to modify the following fishing violations to a civil infraction with a fine of not more than \$150.00: fails to attach the individual's name and address to tip-ups in violation of section 48703(2); or fishes with more than the authorized number of lines in violation of section 48703(1).

- The bill was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate. The bill has been signed into law by the Governor and is Public Act 14 of 2022.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

HB 4151 – Modify Penalties for Certain Hunting and Fishing Licensing Violations – Rep. S. Johnson: The bill would decriminalize failure to carry your hunting or fishing license to a civil infraction with a fine of up to \$150.00.

- The bill was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate. The bill has been signed into law by the Governor and is Public Act 15 of 2022.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

HB 4152 (S-4) – Modify Penalties for Violations of Certain Hunting Provisions – Rep. Howell: The bill would decriminalize the several hunting and fishing provisions from a misdemeanor to a civil infraction with a fine up to \$150.00.

- The bill was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate. The bill is currently before the Governor for consideration.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

HB 4242 (S-2) – Allow Export of Live Minnows, Wigglers or Crayfish as Bait – Rep. Alexander: This bill would allow for the export of live minnow, wigglers, or crayfish as bait.

- The bill was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate. The bill is currently before the Governor for consideration.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

HB 5576 – Prohibit use of anchors in Straits of Mackinac. – Rep. Hood: This bill would prohibit the use of anchors in Straits of Mackinac and require the use of a maritime pilot and marking of obstructions.

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

HB 5631 – Require Creation of Michigan Woodcock Restoration Plan – Rep. Cherry: This bill would put into statute a requirement that the Department must create an American woodcock restoration plan in consultation with several organizations outlined in the legislation by December 31, 2023.

- The bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation.
- The Administration is opposed to this legislation.

HB 5642 – Designate Official State Butterfly – Rep. Brixie: This bill designates the black swallowtail butterfly as the official butterfly of the state of Michigan.

- This bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation.

- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

SB 210 (H-1) – Eliminate Helmet Requirement on ORVs in Certain Circumstances – Sen. McBroom: The bill eliminates the helmet requirement for ORV use if a person possesses a written verification from a physician that the person, for physical or medical reasons, is unable to wear a helmet.

- The bill was passed by the Senate and reported with recommendation by the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation. The bill is currently awaiting a vote on the House floor.
- The Administration is opposed to this legislation.

SB 211 (H-1) – Eliminate Helmet Requirement on Snowmobiles in Certain Circumstances – Sen. McBroom: The bill eliminates the helmet requirement for snowmobile use if a person possesses a written verification from a physician that the person, for physical or medical reasons, is unable to wear a helmet.

- The bill was passed by the Senate and reported with recommendation by the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation. The bill is currently awaiting a vote on the House floor.
- The Administration is opposed to this legislation.

SB 251 (S-2) – Modify Commercial Fishing Regulations – Sen. McBroom: The bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act for the purpose of restricting the DNR’s authority to issue Fisheries Orders for the management of the state-licensed commercial fishery. In addition, the bill would make a number of changes including putting current fisheries orders into statute.

- The bill was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate. The bill is currently before the Governor for consideration.
- The Administration is neutral on the S-2 version of this legislation.

HR 219 – Resolution of Urging Wolf Management Advisory Council and the NRC to Organize Wolf Hunting and Trapping in 2022 – Rep. Markkanen: A resolution to urge the Wolf Management Advisory Council and the Natural Resources Commission to authorize, and the Department of Natural Resources to organize, wolf hunting and trapping as part of the state's wolf management efforts beginning in 2022.

- The resolution was discharged from the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation and adopted by the House of Representatives.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this resolution.

SCR 7 (H-1) – Resolution of Urging NRC and Department to Organize Wolf Hunting and Trapping in 2022 – Sen. McBroom: A concurrent resolution to urge the Natural Resources Commission to authorize, and the Department of Natural Resources to organize, wolf hunting and trapping as part of the state’s wolf management efforts beginning in 2022.

- The resolution was adopted by the Senate and the House of Representatives. The H-1 version of the resolution adopted by the House has been returned to the Senate for consideration.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this resolution.

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

Good Information to Know

DNR Public Meetings – Future Dates

For virtual or conference call meeting information, please go to the DNR website at: www.michigan.gov/DNRMeetings and click on the appropriate meeting and/or agenda for instructions.

March 15	Wolf Management Advisory Committee–Work Session, 1pm, Kewadin–Sault Ste. Marie
March 16	Wolf Management Advisory Committee–Meeting, 9am, Kewadin–Sault Ste. Marie (call 517-599-1067)
March 17	UP Sportsperson Coalition Meeting, 6pm, Bay College–Escanaba
March 22	Western Upper Peninsula Citizens’ Advisory Council, 6pm, in Baraga
March 22	UP Sportsperson Coalition Meeting, 6pm Central, Sagola Township Community Center–Crystal Falls

- March 24 Fisheries Conversations & Coffee–Northern Lake Michigan Mgmt Unit, 7–8pm (see website for details: https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79146_81211-463998--,00.html)
- March 28 Fisheries Conversations & Coffee–Eastern Lake Superior Mgmt Unit, 7–8:30pm (see website for details: https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79146_81211-463998--,00.html)
- March 29 Fisheries Conversations & Coffee–Western Lake Superior Mgmt Unit, 6–8pm (see website for details: https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79146_81211-463998--,00.html)
- March 30 Fisheries Conversations & Coffee–Western Lake Superior Mgmt Unit, 6–8pm (see website for details: https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79146_81211-463998--,00.html)
- March 31 Fisheries Conversations & Coffee–Western Lake Superior Mgmt Unit, 7–9pm (see website for details: https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79146_81211-463998--,00.html)
- April 4 Fisheries Conversations & Coffee–Eastern Lake Superior Mgmt Unit, 7–8:30pm (see website for details: https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79146_81211-463998--,00.html)
- April 5 Fisheries Conversations & Coffee–Eastern Lake Superior & Northern Lake Huron Mgmt Units, 7–8:30pm (see website for details: https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79146_81211-463998--,00.html)
- April 7 Wolf Management Advisory Committee–Meeting, 9am, RAM Center–Roscommon (call 517–599–1067)
- April 14 Natural Resources Commission Meeting (call 517–599–1067)
- April 19 State Forest Public Comment Period–Baraga Forest Mgmt Unit, through May 19 (call 906–201–4688)
- April 28 Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizens’ Advisory Council, 6:30pm, in Newberry
- May 17 Wolf Management Advisory Committee–Meeting, 9am, Marquette Township Community Center (call 517–599–1067)
- May 17 Western Upper Peninsula Citizens’ Advisory Council, 6pm, Marquette Township Community Center
- May 17 UP Sportsperson Coalition Meeting, 1pm, Berland area
- May 18 UP Sportsperson Coalition Meeting, 1pm, Baraga area
- May 19 UP Sportsperson Coalition Meeting, TBD, Shingleton area

U.P. State Park & State Sponsored Activities

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

March 11–13 Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park – Ice Fishing on Lake Gogebic

Recent DNR Press Releases

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

- Showcasing the DNR: Morgan’s industrious beavers (3/10/22)
- Forever forests, hungry bears, new 'Wardens' and more (3/9/22)
- DNR earns national honor for land conservation, wildlife habitat work (3/7/22)
- 2022 spring turkey drawing results available (3/7/22)
- DNR Get Involved: volunteer in state parks, help wildlife, join in fisheries talks (3/4/22)
- DNR extends conservation officer job posting to March 31 (3/3/22)
- March hunting and trapping opportunities in Michigan 3/3/22)
- Showcasing the DNR: Winter’s fading dance (3/3/22)
- New name for a familiar pest: Gypsy moth is now spongy moth (3/2/22)
- State awards \$3.6 million for invasive species projects (3/1/22)
- Delta County pilot not hurt after emergency landing on frozen lake in Schoolcraft County (2/25/22)
- Share your thoughts with the DNR at upcoming meetings (2/25/22)
- Showcasing the DNR: What’s in a name? (2/24/22)

Grant Contacts

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

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|---|--|
| ▪ 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 |

Eastern UPCAC Update

The **Eastern UP Citizens' Advisory Council** met on February 15 virtually. The following topics were included on the agenda and discussed:

- DNR Division Reports by staff
- Annual Election of Officers: Tom Buckingham, Gary Gorniak and Jack Thomas retained their positions for 2022 as chair, vice chair and secretary, respectively
- Wolf Management Advisory Council Update
- Snowmobile Grooming Equipment Update
- Michigan Wildlife Council Update by Dr. Jason Garvon
- State Parks/State Harbors 2021 Survey Results
- Deer Season Recap
- Wildlife Disease Updates (Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease & White Nose Syndrome)
- UP Moose Herd Update
- Subcommittee Reports: Fisheries Subcommittee (Cormorants) and Policy Impact (no report)
- The next meeting will be on April 28, 2022 in Newberry

More information on both the Western and Eastern CACs can be found at www.michigan.gov/upcac.

Division Updates

Law Enforcement Division (LED): Lt. Ryan Aho, District 1 – Western UP

- **CO Jenni Hanson** responded to a call of an injured woman lost on snowmobile Trail 160. The elderly woman had somehow lost consciousness and woke up on the trail, complaining of shoulder pain. While enroute, dispatch notified CO Hanson that a group of snowmobilers had located the injured woman and discovered her deceased husband. **CO Zach Painter and PCO Paul Lyden**, along with other agencies assisted CO Hanson in the snowmobile investigation involving the fatality.
- **CO Byron Parks** conducted a snowmobile patrol in Ontonagon County to target careless operation. CO Parks observed one snowmobile operator to disregard a posted road crossing stop and proceed through the intersection at a high rate of speed. CO Parks was able to catch up to the subject and stop the operator. The driver was cited for careless operation of a snowmobile.
- **CO Byron Parks** conducted a snowmobile patrol to target careless operation along the snowmobile trail in Ontonagon County. Two riders were observed to disregard posted road crossing stop signs and traveling through the intersections at a high rate of speed with disregard for oncoming traffic. CO Parks was able to catch up the operators and initiate a stop. Both were cited for careless operation.
- **COs Zach Painter, Ethen Mapes, Jenni Hanson, and Sgt. Marc Pomroy** assisted the training section in conducting the snowmobile enforcement training school for the new hires of 2021.

- **CO Brian Lasanen** assisted the Houghton County Sheriff's Department in locating an inmate who walked away from inmate work crew in the Calumet area. Multiple agencies assisted in looking for the inmate. He was located by the MSP K-9 hiding under pine trees covered in snow. The inmate was taken back into custody and transported back to the Houghton County Jail.
- **COs Brian Lasanen and Doug Hermanson** conducted an evening sound meter patrol in a high traffic area of Houghton County. The COs contacted numerous snowmobiles and tested two snowmobiles. Both were equipped with trail can exhaust systems and they were under the legal decibel of 88. The COs also addressed other violations including as failure to attach trail permit, careless operation, and failure to attach registration.
- **CO Alex VanWagner** was working snowmobiles in the Caspian area when a call came out of a possible breaking and entering and domestic in progress in Iron River. CO VanWagner responded to the residence and arrived on scene with an officer from the Iron River Police Department (IRPD) and troopers from the MSP. A subject was bleeding after punching a window out on the door to the residence. The incident was turned over to IRPD and the subject was transferred to the hospital for medical treatment.
- **COs Anna Viau and Alex VanWagner** conducted a snowmobile patrol on Iron County's snowmobile trails and lakes. Many positive checks were made, and multiple verbal warnings were issued for no trail permits, fail to affix trail permit decal and registration decal, and no fishing license in possession. The COs also came across a single snowmobile crash in Iron River.
- **COs Alex VanWagner and Anna Viau** patrolled Iron County snowmobile trails on a busy Saturday. As the COs were heading through Iron River, they came across a minor snowmobile accident that had just happened. After attending to the medical needs of the driver of the snowmobile, COs VanWagner and Viau assisted the driver and her husband in getting the snowmobile out of the ditch. The snowmobile had minor damage and the driver had mild soreness, for which she refused medical treatment.
- **CO Anna Viau** checked a few large lakes in Iron County one Sunday. She contacted several anglers, who were having mixed success fishing. CO Viau issued a few warnings that days, including expired snowmobile registration, no fishing license in possession, and no ORV license.
- **CO Phil Helminen** assisted Wisconsin Game Wardens with an investigation of hunters from several states illegally taking deer in Florence County Wisconsin in 2020. CO Helminen interviewed a suspect who was living in Michigan. When presented with the evidence against him, the suspect admitted to illegally taking a deer in Florence County in 2020. The report was turned over to Wisconsin Wardens for prosecution.
- **CO Phil Helminen and Sgt. Brian Bacon** were checking anglers ice fishing in Dickinson County. As the COs approached two individuals, one was observed operating an ATV without a registration sticker. The other was contacted and did not have a fishing license in their possession. A warning was issued for the no license in possession and a ticket was issued for not having an ORV registration.
- **COs Phil Helminen and Jeff Dell** were conducting snowmobile patrols in Dickinson County. The COs observed a snowmobile being operated on the trail without a trail permit. The snowmobile was stopped, and the driver stated he did not have a trail permit. A citation was issued for no trail permit.
- **COs in District 1 Area 2** conducted a group patrol on Saturday for operating while intoxicated, careless operation, and sound enforcement, along with local lakes for fishing violations. A total of 280 miles of trail were patrolled. Violations encountered were failing to attach trail permit, unregistered snowmobile, and failing to purchase trail permits.
- **COs John Kamps and Jeremy Sergey** interviewed an individual suspected of purchasing a deer license after he shot a buck last deer season. After initially attempting to cover up his actions, the individual eventually confessed to hunting without a license, shooting a buck, and purchasing a license after the fact. A report is being filed with the Marquette County Prosecutor's Office.
- **COs Jeremy Sergey and Angela Greenway** participated in a Facebook Q&A recruiting event. The COs helped answer questions about the current CO job openings, as well as how to prepare for the academy and various other details about life as a Conservation Officer.
- **CO Jeremy Sergey** was the guest speaker at Northern Michigan University's Advanced Criminal Investigations class. CO Sergey discussed various investigative methods used by COs for fish and game, and general criminal cases.
- **CO Jeremy Sergey** and wildlife biologist Brian Roell received a report of a sick moose on Trail 14 near the AAA Road in Marquette County. The moose was clearly very weak and unable to lift its head. The moose was dispatched and is being examined by a laboratory downstate.
- **COs Cody Smith, John Kamps, Detective Josh Boudreaux, and Sgt. Mark Leadman** conducted a group snowmobile patrol on Trail #417 in Chocolay Township. The patrol targeted snowmobiles disobeying the posted 35 mph speed limit along a heavy residential area. Utilizing a radar, nearly 100 snowmobilers were observed. Numerous groups were stopped for speeding and tickets were issued to four subjects for operating well above the posted speed. The highest speed encountered was 83 mph with multiple subjects travelling over 55 mph.

- **PCO Sydney Griffor and CO Jeffrey Dell** checked a pair ice fishing on Hardwood Lake. One individual who had just turned 17 was found to be fishing without a license. The angler was instructed to purchase a license if he wished to continue, and a verbal warning was given for the violation.
- **PCO Sydney Griffor and CO Jeffrey Dell** patrolled Trail 5 on snowmobiles and conducted a traffic stop on a snowmobile with an expired trail permit. The driver of the snowmobile was issued a civil infraction for not having a valid snowmobile trail permit. The driver was instructed to purchase a valid trail sticker for his snowmobile if he wishes to continue operating the machine on trails.
- **COs Shannon Kritz and Jeremy Sergey** represented the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Law Enforcement Division at a career fair held at the National Guard Armory in Ishpeming where they spoke to military service men and women about the conservation officer career.
- **COs Phil Helminen and Alex VanWagner** were checking anglers ice fishing in Iron County. The COs contacted two men fishing in a shanty on Chicaugon Lake. When asked for their fishing licenses, they stated they did not have them with them, but were sure they bought them this summer. A check on their license status showed they had purchased daily fishing licenses on two different occasions in the summer and did not have a current fishing license. Enforcement action was taken.
- **COs Phil Helminen and Jared Ferguson** were checking anglers ice fishing in Dickinson County. The COs contacted two individuals ice fishing in a shanty. One person presented their fishing license and the other stated that they did not have it with them. A license check on the individual showed they did not have a current year fishing license. Enforcement action was taken.
- **COs Phil Helminen and Jared Ferguson** were checking anglers ice fishing in Dickinson County. The COs contacted a group ice fishing. One individual stated he did not have his license with him but was sure he had one as he was ice fishing last year. CO Helminen explained to him that fishing licenses expire on March 31st each year. A license check on the individual showed that he did not have a current year fishing license, nor did he ever purchase a fishing license in Michigan. Enforcement action was taken.
- **COs Alex VanWagner and Phil Helminen** conducted a snowmobile patrol on the trails and lakes in Iron County. Contact was made with two subjects in a shanty who were jigging and had two tip-ups out. Both subjects said they bought daily licenses earlier in the year but did not currently have a valid fishing license. Both subjects were issued citations for fish no license.

Fisheries Division: George Madison, Western Lake Superior Management Unit

The following are the western Upper Peninsula fisheries division highlights for the period of January 22 through March 21, 2022, on behalf of the following Western UP Fisheries Division staff:

- *Lake Superior Unit Basin Coordinator: Patrick Hanchin*
- *Western Lake Superior Management Unit: George Madison*
- *Eastern Lake Superior Management Unit: Cory Kovacs*
- *Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit: Darren Kramer, John Bauman, Jennifer Johnson*
- *Fish Production Unit: Dan Sampson (Thompson/Marquette Supervisor)*
- *Research Unit: Dr. Edward Baker, Dr. Troy Zorn, Shawn Sitar*

Western Lake Superior Management Unit (George Madison, Unit Biologist):

Staff have been conducting traditional winter season work which includes the following tasks:

- Field staff have been conducting late winter, under the ice, limnological profile surveys on trout lakes to assess the amount of dissolved oxygen available for trout survival. During the later period of March, some of the trout lakes are showing a 1-2 foot column of water that is suitable for trout occupancy.
- Field staff have also been conducting under-the-ice netting of pike lakes that are candidates for a no minimum size limit sportfishing regulation.
- Mirror Lake, Porcupine Mtns State Park, was stocked via snowmobile transport, with 3,000 yearling splake averaging 7.5 inches in length. On April 1st, splake fishing regulations at Mirror Lake will go to a Type-C classification, which means that anglers can keep splake at an 8-inch minimum size.
- Preparations have begun for walleye egg take at Little Bay de Noc within the next month, and rearing pond nutrients have been ordered.
- Planning has begun for spring and summer lake and stream survey work, walleye rearing, and walleye stocking. The Lake Gogebic and Ottawa Lake walleye surveys will commence after ice-out, with a follow up fish assemblage survey

being conducted in the month of June. Public meetings will be held this summer to discuss survey results and future management options.

- The DNR research vessel, Lake Char, ported at Marquette, will be doing spring index netting surveys on the south shore of Lake Superior beginning in late April.
- Calls have been coming in from vacationers adjusting their travel plans due to rising gas prices. Folks are wanting to come to one central area and “stay put” and recreate (fish, camp, boating) in one spot.
- There has been a lot of public interest (calls, emails) in steelhead runs, smelt runs, summer camping places.
- Freshwater Burbot study by Northern Michigan University has captured many Burbot this season. Chocolay River yielded high catches (over 300 fish), AuTrain River added a few more, and Munising Bay night fishing has produced a few also. The peak run in the Chocolay River fell in the middle of January. The netting season on Baraga County’s Sturgeon River was slow. The NMU study is planned to continue for another season, but 2022 shaped up to be one of the better sampling seasons for the students.
- Continued work has been occurring on the Fisheries Division Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan. The Steelhead, Salmon, and Splake draft chapters have been submitted. Zoom meetings are being held with area sport clubs and stakeholders to gain input on desires and goals for the management plan.
- UP fisheries management units will be holding their annual Coffee and Conversations meetings this March as shown to the right.
- Here’s a past photo of a Steelhead ascending the Silver River in L’Anse, of which the runs will begin in late March and early April.

EASTERN LAKE SUPERIOR MANAGEMENT UNIT

Monday, March 28, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn Express - Lakeview, E8890 M-28, Munising, MI 49862

Contact: [Cory Kovacs](#)

Monday, April 4, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

LMA Health Department Building, 14150 Hamilton Lake Road, Newberry, MI 49868

Contact: [Cory Kovacs](#)

WESTERN LAKE SUPERIOR MANAGEMENT UNIT

Tuesday, March 29, 6 to 8 p.m. EDT (Ishpeming/Marquette)

Virtual meeting. Meeting details will be provided at a later date.

Contact: [George Madison](#)

Wednesday, March 30, 6 to 8 p.m. EDT (Houghton/Keweenaw)

Virtual meeting. Meeting details will be provided at a later date.

Contact: [George Madison](#)

Thursday, March 31, 7 to 9 p.m. EDT (Ironwood/Bessemer)

Virtual meeting. Meeting details will be provided at a later date.

Contact: [George Madison](#)

NORTHERN LAKE MICHIGAN MANAGEMENT UNIT

Thursday, March 24, 7 to 8 p.m. EDT

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

+1 248-509-0316, 813115118# United States, Pontiac

Phone Conference ID: 813 115 118#

Contact: [Darren Kramer](#)



Parks & Recreation Division-UP Trails: Ron Yesney, UP Trails Coordinator

Trail Specialist: Jeff Kakuk, Western Upper Peninsula

Trail Projects:

- Little Carp Trestle deck reconstruction is complete with only minor site work remaining in spring. This is the final large project on the 11-mile section of DNR rail grade and will allow full use in 2022.
– *No updates since last meeting*
- UP15 Snowmobile trail has been closed the past two seasons due to the failure of a bridge in the Sturgeon River Sloughs Wildlife Area. The bridge design work is nearly complete and plans for construction in summer 2022 should allow the trail to re-open in 22/23 snowmobile season. The project is being funded and managed by DNR Wildlife Division.

- The bridge site is on a USACE developed drainage area and therefore permitting is delayed while under review by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- The Menominee River Trail Bridge near Iron Mountain will be undergoing abutment repairs this summer. This underwater work is the final phase of the project and will not impact trail use.
 - This project came in over budget. Work scope has been reduced and will be going out for bid again soon.
- Other projects are awaiting award of some 2022 funding and are keyed up for summer bidding.
 - The Kenton Culvert site is out for bid and will hopefully be under contract by end of March. This site has failed and been impeding stream flow. The SB ORV trail will be closed from Kenton, MI east to the OC ORV trail until late July.

Snowmobile Trails:

- Snow conditions have remained good, and our sponsors have been working hard to keep trails in peak condition. Most sponsors have felt increased use pressures this year.
- 5 WUP snowmobile sponsors received funding for new machines this year. There will be 6 new groomers working on our trails this season. The 2021 snowmobile supplemental approval has allowed two more groomers to be purchased in the WUP. That will be seven new machines in the WUP fleet!

Trail Specialist: Rob Katona, Central Upper Peninsula

Project Name: ORV Route Grading Alger, Delta, Marquette, Menominee, and Dickinson Counties	Project Name: Sturgeon River Bridge	Project Name: Nahma Grade Multi-Use Trail	Project Name: Clowry Grade Bridges #2, #3 & #6
Description: Multiple projects for grading and smoothing ORV routes with multiple grades planned in high use areas to help prevent rough routes.	Description: Bridge rehab snowmobile trail 2 Dickinson County on State owned Rail-Trail.	Description: Design and construction 3.7 mile multi-use Rail-Trail in Delta County work includes clearing, surfacing and culvert/bridge installation.	Description: Design and rehab/construction of multiple bridges on this designated ORV/snowmobile multi-use Rail-Trail in Marquette County.
Trail Use: Rail Trails	Trail Use: Rail Trails	Trail Use: Rail Trails	Trail Use: Rail Trails
Anticipated Completion: Summer 2022	Anticipated Completion: September 2022	Anticipated Completion:	Anticipated Completion:
Q2 Update: Finishing up work scopes and entering projects for advertising.	Q2 Update: Advertising for construction this spring. Fish biologist would like to perform a mussel survey prior to doing any water work.	Q2 Update: Project on hold awaiting funding. Design for two main water crossings is 100% the remainder of the grade clearing and minor culvert work is in the planning stages. Additional funding is necessary for both phases of the project.	Q2 Update: Advertising for construction this spring.
Project Name: Clowry Grade Bridges #1, #4, #5 & #7	Project Name: Clowry ORV Improvements	Project Name: Little Presque Isle Rec Area Improvements	Project Name: Days River Single-Track Trail Construction
Description: Design and rehab/construction of multiple bridges on this designated ORV/snowmobile multi-use Rail-Trail in Marquette County.	Description: Filling several low areas and culvert replacement on the Clowry Grade ORV C & CL Routes.	Description: Trail repairs, parking improvements and boardwalk/bridge repairs throughout 42 sites at LPI recreation area and Wetmore pond.	Description: Approximately 10 miles of single-track trail construction designed for mountain bike use.
Trail Use: Rail Trails	Trail Use: Rail Trails	Trail Use: Nonmotorized & mountain bike	Trail Use: Nonmotorized & mountain bike
Anticipated Completion: 2025	Anticipated Completion: 7/29/2022	Anticipated Completion: 2023	Anticipated Completion: 2023

Q2 Update: Scoping documents complete awaiting contract for engineering/design.	Q2 Update: Completing work scope for minor construction project advertising this spring.	Q2 Update: Entered work order for awarding engineering/design contract.	Q2 Update: Scoping documents complete awaiting contract for engineering/design.
Project Name: Thunder Valley Trail Development	Project Name: Tyoga Pathway Bridges	Project Name: LPI Songbird Trail and Harlow Creek Bridges	Project Name: Genes Pond Pathway
Description: Complete construction on three additional loops and connector trail to Fairgrounds designed for equestrian use.	Description: Replace one bridge and replace or rehab second bridge both spanning the Laughing Whitefish River.	Description: Replace two popular pedestrian bridges on the LPI songbird trail and pathway to cabin #6 and north trail system.	Description: Construction of 1.75 mile accessible pathway with scenic overlooks adjacent to state forest campground.
Trail Use: Nonmotorized & EQ	Trail Use: Nonmotorized	Trail Use: Nonmotorized	Trail Use: Nonmotorized
Anticipated Completion: 7/29/2022	Anticipated Completion: 2023-2024	Anticipated Completion: 2023-2024	Anticipated Completion: 2023-2024
Q2 Update: Readvertised last fall and awarded contract work will begin after spring break-up.	Q2 Update: Scoping documents complete awaiting contract for engineering/design.	Q2 Update: Scoping documents complete awaiting contract for engineering/design.	Q2 Update: Scoping documents complete awaiting contract for engineering/design.
Project Name: Laughing Whitefish Falls Bridge	Project Name: Norway-Carney ORV/Snowmobile Connector Culverts	Project Name: Days River ORV Route Grading and Gravel	Project Name: Marquette County ORV Routes Improvements
Description: New pedestrian bridge construction on NCT over Laughing Whitefish River at the Laughing Whitefish Falls Natural Area.	Description: New ORV route/snowmobile trail development with several stream crossings requiring new culvert installation. New trail will connect the Norway ORV trail with Carney Lake Rd providing a east-west connection across Dickinson County.	Description: Replace culvert, grade, shape, and fill Days River ORV Route in Delta County	Description: Repair large holes replace culverts and surfacing on multiple ORV routes in western Marquette County
Trail Use: Nonmotorized	Trail Use: ORV/Snowmobile	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV
Anticipated Completion: 2023-2024	Anticipated Completion: Summer/fall 2022	Anticipated Completion: 9/2022	Anticipated Completion: 9/2022
Q2 Update: Scoping documents complete awaiting contract for engineering/design.	Q2 Update: Work scope complete, EGLE permits out for public notice, Coleman Engineering is reviewing culvert designs.	Q2 Update: Finalized work scope need to enter PR for summer construction but waiting on funding.	Q2 Update: Working on work scope still waiting on funding for PR submittal.
Project Name: Forest Islands Repairs and Restoration	Project Name: Felch Grade Surface Improvements II	Project Name: Bass Lake Restoration	Project Name: Gwinn-Arnold Improvements and Restoration II
Description: Repair damaged board walks and damage in low wet areas on the Forest Islands ORV Trail/Route in Menominee and Delta Counties	Description: Gravel capping on the Felch Grade in Menominee and Dickinson Counties	Description: Perform reroutes around eroded areas.	Description: ORV G route Marquette County filling, gravel, and culvert work
Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV
Anticipated Completion: NA	Anticipated Completion: 7/2022	Anticipated Completion: 9/2022	Anticipated Completion: 8/2022
Q2 Update: Received new funding coding and submitted revised work order.	Q2 Update: Waiting on funding to enter PR.	Q2 Update: Complete PR and work scope for summer minor construction project	Q2 Update: Complete PR and work scope for summer minor construction project

Project Name: Delta-Menominee ORV Routes Improvements	Project Name: Central UP ORV Route Dust Control	Proposal: Hiawatha NF ORV Routes Proposal	Proposal: Norway Rock Motorcycle Trail Proposal	Proposal: Dickinson County Snowmobile Trail Reroutes
Description: Minor bridge railing and decking repairs replace culverts and surfacing work	Description: Perform dust control at multiple sites on ORV routes to prevent dust caused by ORV traffic in residential areas and other areas meeting criteria.	Description: Nearly 100 miles of ORV routes proposed to be designated that would provide connectivity and looped riding across Marquette, Delta, Alger and Schoolcraft Counties.	Description: New single track construction in Dickinson County adjacent to the Norway ORV trail	Description: Multiple reroutes to relocate trails to better areas and work with private landowners and the DCRC.
Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: Snowmobile
Anticipated Completion: 9/2022	Anticipated Completion: 6/2022	Anticipated Completion: Awaiting USFS Approval	Anticipated Completion:	Anticipated Completion: Completed 12/2021
Q2 Update: Complete PR and work scope for summer minor construction project waiting on funding.	Q2 Update: Have added and submitted revised contract request.	Q2 Update: Requesting status of USFS final review.	Q2 Update: WLD denied no further progress will occur without their support.	Q2 Update: Most proposals have been approved.
Proposal: Moose Mountain Reroute Snowmobile Trail 8 Three Lakes	Proposal: Days River Nature Trail	Proposal: NCT/IBT Silver Lake Reroute	Proposal: Westwood Pathway	Proposal: Negaunee-Eagle Mills-Gwinn-Little Lake ORV Route
Description: Trail/bridge improvements and reroutes around difficult to groom areas. Logging operation on SCTC property to offset trail reroute costs.	Description: Designate and improve non-motorized pathway located along the Days River near Little Bay De Noc.	Description: Trail reroute to locate trail off of roads near Silver Lake proposal involves some State land for both trail development and parking.	Description: Designate and improve non-motorized pathway located on State owned property adjacent to Ishpeming DNR FO and Westwood High School.	Description: ORV Designate existing snowmobile trails that are already heavily used by ORVs. Designation will allow funding for maintenance and provide direction for community connectivity.
Trail Use: Snowmobile	Trail Use: Snowmobile	Trail Use: Non-motorized Pathway	Trail Use: Non-motorized Pathway	Trail Use: ORV
Anticipated Completion: 1/2022	Anticipated Completion: Spring 2022	Anticipated Completion: Summer 2022	Anticipated Completion: Summer 2022	Anticipated Completion: Proposal submitted Summer/Fall 2022
Q2 Update: Reroute around moose mountain is about 90% complete need to finish work summer of 2022.	Q2 Update: Proposal has been entered going through review.	Q2 Update: Proposal has been entered going through review.	Q2 Update: Proposal has been entered going through review.	Q2 Update: Began discussions with Cliffs on new trail development. Working with the club on securing permits from landowners.
Proposal: Little Lake-Chatham RR Grade ORV Route				
Description: ORV Designate segments of existing RR grade and county roads to provide ORV connectivity between Chatham and Little Lake and beyond.				
Trail Use: ORV				

Anticipated Completion: Proposal submitted Summer/Fall 2022				
Q2 Update: Will be contacting landowners and developing options to review for the proposal.				

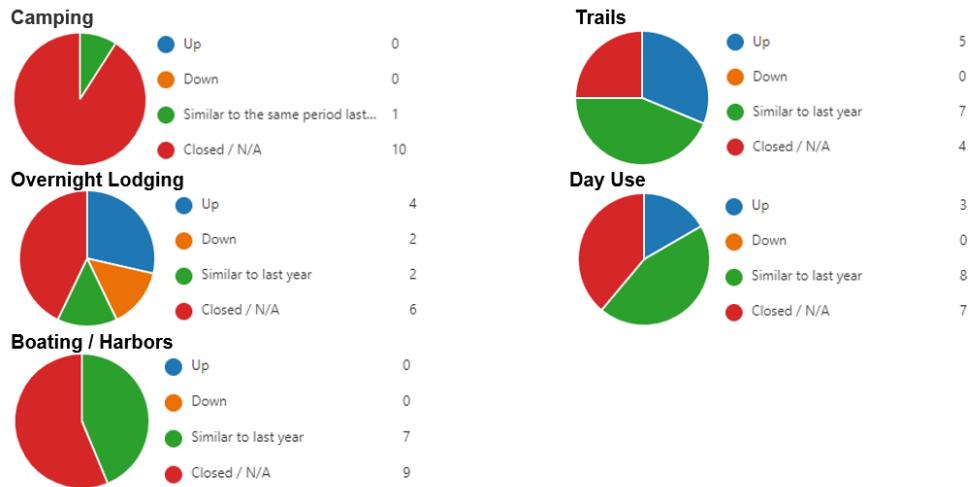
Forest Resources Division: Tom Seablom, Western UP District Supervisor

- Staff continue to telework. Staff have been informed that this will continue till at least May of 2022. For more information on the DNR COVID- 19 response go to: Michigan.Gov/DNR
- Field work on the 2024 YOE Inventory is starting. Due to the ongoing pandemic the division will be hold public meetings in a virtual format. Open House comment periods for the Baraga Unit will start April 19th to May 19th and for the Escanaba Unit from July 9th to August 9th. Open house Comment Periods and Compartment Review schedules for other units are posted online along with other state forest inventory information at: Michigan.Gov/Forestry.
- As of March 9th, 321 timber sale contracts are open WUP Wide. This represents 877,190 cords of timber on 50,413 acres, valued at approximately \$33.7 million. Included in this are 22 GNA sales representing 74,261 cords of timber on 4,771 acres, valued at approximately \$2.9 million
- WUP Units are reporting 31 Active Timber Sales in the WUP totaling about 3,291 acres. Units report good demand for sawtimber, with increasing interest in Red Maple reported by the Baraga unit
- Currently the fire protection staff are preparing for the spring fire season. Several meetings are planned not only within the division but our association with other cooperators will be visited within the next month. These scheduled meetings allow for our staff along with other agencies to meet and share updates/critical changes in fire program areas that occurred over the winter months.
- The long-range forecast for the U.P. is for above normal precipitation and average temperatures. As the landscape opens after the winter snows and fuels dry usually in early April, we will get a better idea for what the season might bring us. Rain always plays heavily in this arena. If little rain is received for the spring months, we will see a busy spring wildfire season. Currently, the state has Two Tractor/Plow units dispatched to Texas. A total of four people with three of them being from the U.P. This a great opportunity to get a few more people qualified for the tractor-plow initial attack position. The assignment would allow 2 trainees to work with experienced operators to gain their qualifications.
- The Forest Utilization and Marketing program is surveying two sectors of the forest industry this spring. The sawmill (primary manufacturers) survey is underway right now and the loggers (wood producers) survey will be coming out in April. The loggers' survey is part of a tri-state survey with Minnesota and Wisconsin to survey all loggers in the Great Lakes Region every 5 years. Reports and analysis of each survey will be available in the fall of 2022 and circulated to various groups and posted to the forest products industry web page at: Michigan.Gov/ForestProducts
- The Forest Health Program has been collecting reports of surviving large (greater than 22 inch DBH) elm trees from Michigan's coldest climate zones in the Western U.P. and is working with USDA Forest Service to collect branch material and propagate from these trees for future seed orchards tolerant of Dutch elm disease that will eventually benefit reforestation efforts. Emerald ash borer (EAB) was detected by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and

Rural Development forestry assistance program in Ontonagon County. While EAB is anticipated across the U.P., there are no official reports from Iron and Gogebic counties.

- Open enrollment for the Commercial Forest Program will continue until April 1st. For more information on the Commercial Forest Program go to Michigan.Gov/Commercialforest.

Parks & Recreation Division: Doug Rich, WUP District Supervisor



Camping

McLain	Unit moving forward with Phase 3 (Sewer, water, mini cabin moving) of McLain's construction. This project should only effect fall 2022 camping.
Bewabic	Progressing on the Phase 100 studies for asphalt resurfacing and wastewater disposal.
Baraga FO	Burned burn pile at Bewabic State Park.
Van Riper SP	Renovation on the Peshekee River Rustic Cabin within Van Riper State Park started in February. Upgrades to include, new windows, siding, tongue, and groove on the interior ceiling, refinishing of existing tongue and groove on the walls, new cabinets and the project will be finished up with an epoxy floor. All work will be completed by the end of April in time for the busy camping season.
Lake Gogebic Field Crew	The Gogebic Crew worked on an office remodel at Bewabic State Park. This project involved drywall replacement and repairs. The Crew replaced flooring at the Porcupine Mountains headquarters office. They also completed interior finish work on the Porkies tiny house.
Fort Wilkins HSP	Completed 90% review for the water line and sanitation station upgrade. Bids will be due April 20. Again, unit pricing and contractor availability are a concern.
Wells SP	Staff are working on procurement of a new office printer and two new mowers.

Overnight Lodging

McLain	Cabins at McLain have been booked more this winter than in the past. Mostly full on the weekends.
Twin Lakes	Lodge rental cancelations due to COVID, snowstorm and a no show, all made for a slow 2 months.
Van Riper SP	Overnight lodging is down this year due to the renovations to the Peshekee River Rustic Cabin.
Craig Lake SP	Both yurts have seen on average about 50% occupancy during January and February 2022.
Little Presque Isle	Use is up at the cabins at Little Presque Isle State Forest. Use has been so heavy that we ran out of firewood.
Lake Gogebic Field Crew	The crew began a remodel of the Peshekee cabin at Van Riper State Park. This project includes new window installation, some interior work and new wood siding on the outside.
Fort Wilkins HSP	Working on a few improvements to the park cabins, new flooring, some new furniture, etc.
Wells SP	Cabin and lodge use has been on par with other years, very similar use.

Boating Access Sites and Harbors

Baraga FO	Worked on skid piers. plowed snow. took depth soundings at Harlow Lake. serviced equipment.
Escanaba FO	Ice fishing winter use is like last year- plowed sites being regularly maintained and used.
Lake Gogebic SP	Heavy snowmobile use at Bergland Dock, Lac View Desert, East Shore, and at the parks launches.
Eagle Harbor	Entering 90% review phase on Eagle Harbor upgrades. Unit pricing and contractor availability for expansion project is a concern.
Fort Wilkins HSP	Looking into some much-needed repairs to our fishing platform but will have to wait for ice out.
Baraga SP	Ice fishing has increased at local BAS sites as most inland lakes are now frozen, especially Vermilac Lake and Otter Lake.
Cedar River Harbor	Ice suppression systems are being checked daily; everything is good so far. A pre-bid meeting was held for a sinking walkway, repairs to the fuel dock and raising docks. Quotes are also being taken to replace the failing water heater.

Trails

McLain SP	Skiing and snowshoeing use at the park has been busy this year.
Twin Lakes	Seems like there is more off trail riding.
Escanaba FO	Usage at both Days River and Anderson Lake Pathways continues to rise. Users include snowshoers, skiers, bikers and walkers.
Van Riper SP	Trail use has been about the same at Van Riper State Park. The park hosted one lantern lit snowshoe which saw about 40 participants. The first event was cancelled due to unsafe weather conditions.
Craig Lake State Park	Backcountry camping was presented to the PRD Section Chiefs as information to change from first come first served to reservable starting in 2023 like the Porkies model. There was support across the team for both safety reasons, emergency response and customer service considerations. Staff has also been putting together plans for additional backcountry toilets within the park to aid in the prevention of resource degradation.
Little Presque Isle	With visitor use and snowfall amounts have increased this winter, plowing has become a challenge at Little Presque Isle. We are running out of space for snow and are doing our best to keep the lots clean to visitors to get out and enjoy our facilities.
Baraga SP	Very heavy use on the snowmobile route through the park. There has been routine use of the staging area.
Lake Gogebic SP	Excellent snow conditions make very busy trails.

Day Use

Twin Lakes SP	Fishermen used day-use until Baraga Bay froze and allowed fishermen to fish there.
Baraga SP	There has been more individual / small group use of the park for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing and several larger groups have also used the park roads and trail. Ice fishing on Keweenaw Bay has increased significantly.
Bond Falls	There has been a lot of walk-in traffic at the site despite heavy snowfalls. The winter ice formations and scenery have been drawing in snowmobilers and photographers as well.
Menominee River	This site was selected for a \$300,000 MNRTF grant for bridges and viewing platforms. Project funding is awaiting approval in the legislature. Plans for expanding the parking lot by 5 spots will also be completed this season.

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

McLain SP	Park staff has been busy plowing snow and keeping up with cabin rentals.
Bewabic SP	Our office remodel is coming along very nicely! Funded by district small projects, we are adding office cabinets and countertop, drywall repair and new paint, and new office chairs. This is a much needed and appreciated upgrade.
Escanaba FO	Escanaba staff have been actively working to fill vacant position and collaborate with Michigan National Guard to construct vault toilets for various locations throughout WUP.

Van Riper SP	This January staff hosted a Lantern Lit Snowshoe/Ski event at Blueberry Ridge Ski Pathway. Staff worked hard to get all lanterns and trails ready for the event. This event saw more than 800 participants and was highly welcomed by the public. We will be looking to host more events to highlight our different trails in the future. Staff presented virtually to the Township Association of Marquette County in January, giving a background and overview of what the Van Riper State Park Unit encompasses and manages. The group said they learned a lot and appreciated the opportunity to learn about what we do in Michigan State Parks. In addition, Debra Gill has been accepted to the next cohort of the Great Lakes Leadership Academy's Emerging Leader Program.
Little Presque Isle	Planning is underway for a large-scale trails project funded through the MNRTF at Little Presque Isle, slated for construction during the 2023 season. Staff has had meetings to begin the process through DTMB for getting an engineering company on board to start the process to improve the trail system.
Baraga SP	Prep work for a playground fundraising push utilizing Mobile Cause is underway. A new design for the playground is being developed. Park ranger Lamar Mercer is also at Law Academy. The Department has also signed a gift and acceptance agreement with the Village of Baraga to extend the non-motorized pathway (Trust Fund grant) into the park.
Bond Falls	Staff has been working with the PRD grant coordinator to update MNRTF grant documentation for a submittal for engineering and reconstruction of the deteriorating stairway and retaining wall. Work has been done with the local disability network to obtain a project review / support letter for the project and staff has also received updated community support letters to supplement the grant application. A unit accessibility and inclusivity review were written and included for the grant update per the recommendation of the disability network. It is hoped these inclusions improve the chance of success for this grant application.
Lake Gogebic SP	The parks groomed cross country ski trail has been very appreciated by visitors this year.
Fort Wilkins HSP	No special events, ski trails have been in very good shape and there has been plenty of ice for ice fishing.
Porcupine Mountains WSP	<p>The Gogebic Crew installed new flooring in the Headquarters building. Staff painted the interior of the building. The interior of the Tiny House was also completed. Two great public events at the ski hill in February: Midwest Telefest and the Snowburst Winter Carnival. The Park Interpreter Hosted 4 weekends of Lantern Lit Snowshoe hikes. Rangers assisted with snowmobile safety classes at Ontonagon and Ewen Trout Creek Schools.</p> <p>Also, you may be hearing that major changes are in store for the Winter Sports Complex for the upcoming summer and winter operations at the ski hill.</p> <p>Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park staff is preparing to transition to new operations management at the ski complex after Gogebic Community College (GCC) decided in 2020 it no longer wanted to operate the ski hill. This exit transition was requested by GCC's executive office as the college's economic and strategic goals have been achieved. The DNR's goals are to continue to provide and sustain an exceptional visitor experience, ensure fiscal responsibility and viability, and directly involve park staff with the day-to-day operations, to further support from the community and to create a year-round destination park.</p> <p>After the college's decision, the DNR began a request for proposals process in September 2020. The DNR posted an invitation to bid for a year-round concessionaire contract which included: all ski hill operations, chalet, cafeteria, park stores, vending machines and disc golf course. In December 2020, it was determined that none of the bidders met the minimum qualifications, and no bid award was issued. There was a proposal submitted by a local nonprofit organization which did not meet the minimum bid qualifications.</p> <p>DNR-PRD staff spent the next 10 months developing and vetting a variety of operational plan options. It was determined that a Co-Op Model (PRD staff in concert with a private concession), would result in the least amount of impact on ski hill visitors and patrons and would be the most fiscally responsible option. To implement this operations model, the Parks and Recreation Division will hire additional park staff, with ski operations experience, to perform year-round and seasonal operations.</p>

Wells SP	<p>Porcupine Mountains Park staff will directly manage the outdoor operations, which includes, but is not limited to, grooming equipment, chairlift operation and ski area infrastructure. The year-round concession contractor will oversee the daily indoor operations, which includes retail, rental, event management and concessions at the ski hill and park stores. The concession contractor, Friends of the Porkies, and park staff will collaborate efforts for major events at the ski hill.</p> <p>In September 2021, the DNR announced and posted a competitive bid letting process in alignment with Michigan’s Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act and the DNR’s commercial use policy. This process requires applicants to provide their best proposal, including everything they are willing to offer and can demonstrate they can provide. The new concession contract required operation of the Outpost store, Visitors Center store, and the concessions at the ski hill. One of the long-standing goals was to provide an enhanced variety of recreational opportunities to make the ski area more of a year-round destination and to encourage visitors to stay longer in the area.</p> <p>A decision to award a concession contract was made based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added amenities, including year-round food at the chalet, shuttle service to the Lake of the Clouds Scenic Overlook and the Presque Isle Unit of the Porcupine Mountains, online food ordering, and equipment rentals. • Specialized services beyond concession management to include mountain biking and sea kayaking services to the guests of the Porcupine Mountains. • Scoring of the bid proposals received (selection criteria includes business experience, financial stability, and the amount to be paid to the State – as detailed within the bid). <p>We understand and recognize that transitions can be difficult. From 1950 to 2003, the State of Michigan solely operated the Porcupine Mountains Winter Sports Complex, and we are prepared to once again take on this important role in partnership with our concession contractor. In doing so, we plan to fulfil the DNR-PRD’s mission to acquire, protect and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan’s unique resources, and to provide access to land- and water-based public recreation and educational opportunities as implemented through the division’s Strategic Plan. Having a sustainable management system in place will help ensure the stability of this important component of the entire park resource.</p>
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Wildlife Division: John DePue, Biologist-Baraga

Wildlife Surveys

- Winter deer road survey: Staff will be surveying deer activity during the winter to better understand use of critical winter habitat. This data will allow UP Region staff to prioritize forest management activities when working with Forest Resources Division on management of state forest and provide information for interacting with stakeholders.
- Winter wolf survey: Currently the Michigan DNR conducts a survey every other winter to estimate the wolf population. The most recent survey, completed in the winter of 2019-20, resulted in a minimum wolf population estimate of 695 wolves. The DNR is currently conducting the survey to produce a 2021-22 minimum population estimate.
- Winter bat hibernacula survey: Counting bats in hibernacula and assessing impacts from White-nose syndrome.

Deer Habitat Grant

- Application deadline was Friday, March 11 for the Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative (DHIP) grant. Grant applications are currently being reviewed and reward recipients will be notified later this spring. The DHIP is

designed to foster productive relationships between the DNR, sportsperson’s organizations, interested citizens and other partners to produce tangible deer habitat improvements and educate the public about the importance of the habitat work accomplished through the grant and the scientific principles involved in it.

Bear Season Update

- Weather was warm, yet hunters reported seeing multiple bears on camera.
- Natural food sources were present across the west U.P., ranging from average to below average with the notable exception of a lack of blueberries and blackberries, which could have hindered or bolstered hunting opportunities depending on the location.
- A preliminary summary of the 2021 harvest by bear management unit is shown.

State Licensed Hunter Harvest

BMU	DESIRED HARVEST	BEARS	LICENSE	% of QUOTA
		REGISTERED	QUOTA	REGISTERED
Bergland	200	260	1050	25
Baraga	300	286	1545	19
Amasa	165	150	500	30
Carney	105	118	550	21
Gwinn	150	180	950	19
Newberry	260	353	1170	30
Drummond Island	5	4	6	67
Zone 1	1185	1351	5771	23
Red Oak	317	336	770	44
Baldwin	168	133	340	39
Gladwin	24	36	120	30
Zone 2	509	505	1230	41
Total*	1694	1856	7001	27

* Total harvest lower than actual total due to registrations without hunt number

Wildlife Disease

- Michigan NDR and USDA-APHIS are monitoring the spread of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), which has been found in commercial flocks in Missouri, Maryland, and South Dakota.
- Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHDV2): Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus 2 (RHDV2) is a highly contagious virus affecting domestic and wild rabbits. RHDV2 is a Foreign Animal Disease that has appeared periodically in North America and has a high case fatality rate. It has been found in wild populations of hare and jackrabbit in numerous states but has not been detected in Michigan. The Wildlife Health Section is on the look-out and are currently conducting what is called passive surveillance for the disease. For passive surveillance to work, we are largely dependent on DNR staff and public citizens to be our “eyes in the field”! Any wild animals that are detected with symptoms or histories suggestive of RHDV2 are requested to be rushed to the lab for testing. This last year we had a total of 9 individual animals submitted of species susceptible to the disease. Of those 9, only 2 had histories suggestive of RHDV2 and received disease specific testing. Both came back negative.