



## Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

Date of Production: May 2024 (Information current as of 5/22/2024)

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

### *Meetings/Events/Press Releases*

#### **Upcoming DNR Public Meetings**

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

May 29	Western UP Citizens' Advisory Council, 6pm Eastern/5pm Central, Ironwood (906-226-1331)
May 31	Michigan Iron Industry Museum Advisory Board, 3 pm (906-475-7857)
June 5	Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizens Advisory Council, 6 pm (906-226-1331)
June 11	Michigan Iron Industry Museum Advisory Board, 3 pm (906-475-7857)
June 12	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board, 9 am (517-284-5954)
June 12	Coldwater Resources Steering Committee, 10:30 am (989-778-0389)
June 12	Equine Trails Subcommittee, 1 pm (517-331-6219)
June 13	Michigan Natural Resources Commission, 9 am (NRC@michigan.gov)
June 26	Michigan State Waterways Commission, 9am (517-285-0747)
June 26	Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee, 2 pm (517-284-6135)
June 28	Timber and Forest Products Advisory Council, 10am (517-582-3204)

#### **UP State Park & State Sponsored Activities**

Please check with the state park before attending activity for any scheduling changes. For all activities: [DNR Things to Do Calendar](#)

*Stay tuned for lots of activities at UP State Parks this summer!*

#### **Recent DNR Press Releases**

For full details, go to: [DNR Press Room](#)

- Apply for bear and elk licenses (5/17/24)
- DNR News: Honoring fallen COs, hot firewood tips, state forest input and more (5/14/24)
- Kalkaska men arraigned, accused of torturing animals and illegal hunting (5/10/24)
- Showcasing the DNR: Bringing back 'the good berry' – efforts to restore manoomin (5/9/24)
- Bridge replacement project slated for Dickinson County (5/8/24)
- Some 're-leaf:' Limited and declining spongy moth populations continue in 2024 (5/8/24)
- DNR News: Hunter safety, Coffee with Commissioners, birding open houses, Beyond BOW (5/6/24)
- Natural Resources Commission meets May 9 in Acme; draft agenda online (5/3/24)
- Showcasing the DNR: Fading, fallen but not forgotten (5/2/24)
- Boaters, get ready for a summer on the water! (5/2/24)
- News Digest: Spring birding tour, invasive species action, CO webinar and more (5/1/24)
- Two elk or bear tags in one year? (5/1/24)
- DNR announces summer Beyond BOW events (5/1/24)
- Boating access site to temporarily close at Lake Gogebic State Park (4/30/24)

## Grant Contacts

For grant information, to go: [DNR Grants](#)

▪ Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant	Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, <a href="mailto:carlockm@michigan.gov">carlockm@michigan.gov</a>
▪ Recreation Passport Grant	Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, <a href="mailto:carlockm@michigan.gov">carlockm@michigan.gov</a>
▪ Michigan Spark Grants (Public Recreation)	Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, <a href="mailto:carlockm@michigan.gov">carlockm@michigan.gov</a>
▪ Aquatic Habitat Grant	Chip Kosloski, 517-284-5965, <a href="mailto:kosloskic3@michigan.gov">kosloskic3@michigan.gov</a>
▪ Fisheries Habitat Grant Program	Chip Kosloski, 517-284-5965, <a href="mailto:kosloskic3@michigan.gov">kosloskic3@michigan.gov</a>
▪ Michigan Invasive Species Grant	Erin Campbell, 269-300-9698, <a href="mailto:campbelle6@michigan.gov">campbelle6@michigan.gov</a>
▪ Wildlife Habitat Grant	Clay Buchanan, 517-614-0918, <a href="mailto:buchanenc1@michigan.gov">buchanenc1@michigan.gov</a>
▪ U.P. Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Grant	Bill Scullon, 906-563-9247, <a href="mailto:scullonh@michigan.gov">scullonh@michigan.gov</a>
▪ Forestry Grants	<a href="https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/forestry">https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/forestry</a>
▪ Land & Water Conservation Fund	Christie Bayus, 517-242-8737, <a href="mailto:bayusc@michigan.gov">bayusc@michigan.gov</a>
▪ Waterways Program Grants	Linnea Dawson, 517-290-2200, <a href="mailto:dawsonl@michigan.gov">dawsonl@michigan.gov</a>

## May NRC Meeting Summary – Ed Golder, Public Information Officer

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission met May 9 at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme.

The session opened with a meeting of the Fisheries Committee where three presentations were heard.

- Robert Stuber, executive director of the Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition provided an overview and discussed various current dam issues.
- Kimberly Balke, program director for the Conservation Resources Alliance, talked about a historic dam removal leading to “The Boardman Ottaway River Reborn.”
- DNR Fisheries Division Chief Randy Claramunt offered closing and summary remarks on dams and related conservation efforts.

Today’s Director’s Report at the NRC’s Committee of the Whole session included:

- A recognition of former NRC Commissioner and Past-Chairwoman Carol Rose.
- Meghan Stevens of the DNR’s Forest Resources Division discussed proposed [Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No. 3 of 2024](#) concerning negative dispersed camping issues at Stoddard’s Landing on the Rifle River, north of Omer, in Arenac County. The order would prohibit dispersed camping at the site.
- Sara Thompson, DNR wildlife division chief and Randy Claramunt, DNR fisheries division chief provided an [update on cormorant management](#). The two divisions are working together using non-lethal and lethal means to address conflicts with cormorants and their impacts to fish populations.
- Brian Frawley, survey coordinator for the DNR’s wildlife division, detailed results in the [2023 Deer Harvest Survey](#). Among the results, 1.4% increase in license buyers, 2% increase in the number of people going afield, 2% increase in the total number of deer harvested, 28% of hunters wanted to take one deer while 24% of hunters would take three or more deer.
- Chad Stewart, deer and elk management specialist with the DNR’s Wildlife Division, provided the latest information on the [Deer Management Initiative](#). A timeline for the effort was provided including individual reports due May 24 with actionable recommendations to the NRC at the June meeting. A June 26 work group meeting will be held. Decisions for deer season finalized at July NRC meeting. An opinion survey of participants on the Lower Peninsula and Upper Peninsula DMI committees produced favorable opinions of the process and other aspects of the effort.

In the new business portion of today’s meeting, [Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No. 3 of 2024 on Stoddard’s Landing](#) was presented for information, with action slated for next month’s meeting.

Five land transactions from [Dickinson](#), [Barry](#), [Grand Traverse](#), [Lenawee](#) and [Clinton](#) counties were signed by Director Bowen.

Under Old Business, [Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 4 of 2024](#) involving falconry regulations was approved by the commission.

The next NRC meeting will be June 13 at Lansing Community College – West in Rooms 119-121.

A legislative report was also provided and is listed 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](mailto:nrc@michigan.gov).
- If you would like further information or would like to address the Commission, please email: [nrc@michigan.gov](mailto: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](http://www.michigan.gov/NRC)).

### ***May Legislative Update – Taylor Ridderbusch, Legislative Liaison***

#### **HB 5665 – Provides for Waiver of Hunters Safety Course – Rep. Hoadley**

This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to provide for a waiver of hunter safety course for individuals with a valid concealed pistol license and military service members.

- The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Judiciary.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

#### **HB 5685 – Designates Official State Duck – Rep. Farhat**

This bill designates the Wood duck as the official duck of the state of Michigan.

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

#### **SB 803 – Extends Sunset on Pheasant License Fee– Sen. Cherry**

This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to extend the sunset on the Pheasant License Fees.

- This bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Agriculture.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

#### **SB 817 – Provide Appropriations from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund – Sen. Cherry**

This bill contains the recommendations made by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board for Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant awards for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The proposed appropriation totals more than \$27.3 million in project funding from the trust fund.

- The bill was passed by the Senate, received by the House and is awaiting committee assignment.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

### ***Eastern UPCAC Update***

The **Eastern UP Citizens Advisory Council** met in person in Manistique on April 4. Agenda topics included a wolf management update, the DNR's response to an EUPCAC resolution on NRC-approved Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 1 of 2024, a deer management initiative update, and a presentation on the Michigan Wildlife Council, an overview of the Fisheries Division's 2024 conversations and coffee events, and a snowmobile season summary. A scheduled resolution consideration to allow December crossbow use in a portion of the UP as well as a consideration of a new proposed resolution to recommend opposing allowance of E-bikes to access and utilize the Michigan state parks-managed land were deferred until the next meeting due to lack of a quorum. **The next meeting of the group will be on June 5 in Newberry.**

More information on both the Western and Eastern CACs can be found at [www.michigan.gov/upcac](http://www.michigan.gov/upcac).

## **Executive Division: Stacy Haughey, UP Field Deputy**

*Emailed to both the WUPCAC & EUPCAC council members on 5/11/24.*

FWS PRESS RELEASE - Feb 2, 2024

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service completes status review and finding for gray wolves in the Western United States; launches National Recovery Plan**

**WASHINGTON** — Recognizing that the national discussion around gray wolf management must look more comprehensively at conservation tools available to federal, state and Tribal governments, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today announced a path to support a long term and durable approach to the conservation of gray wolves, to include a process to develop – for the first time – a National Recovery Plan under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for gray wolves in the lower 48 states. Today’s announcement does not make any changes to the legal status of gray wolves in the United States.

After an extensive peer-reviewed assessment using the best available science, the Service today announced a not warranted finding for two petitions to list gray wolves under the ESA in the Northern Rocky Mountains and the Western United States. This finding is not action-forcing; the legal status of gray wolves does not change as a result of this finding.

The Service conducted a comprehensive analysis using robust modeling that incorporated the best available data from federal, state and Tribal sources, academic institutions and the public. The model assessed various threats, including human-caused mortality, existing regulatory mechanisms, and disease. The analysis indicates that wolves are not at risk of extinction in the Western United States now or in the foreseeable future.

Gray wolves are listed under the ESA as endangered in 44 states, threatened in Minnesota, and under state jurisdiction in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and portions of eastern Oregon and Washington. Based on the latest data as of the end of 2022, there were approximately 2,797 wolves distributed across at least 286 packs in seven states in the Western United States. This population size and widespread distribution contribute to the resiliency and redundancy of wolves in this region. The population maintains high genetic diversity and connectivity, further supporting their ability to adapt to future changes.

#### **Next Steps in Gray Wolf Management**

In a [February 2022 op-ed](#), Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland wrote: “I am committed to ensuring that wolves have the conservation they need to survive and thrive in the wild based on science and law... It is critical that we all recognize that our nation’s wolf populations are integral to the health of fragile ecosystems and hold significant cultural importance in our shared heritage.”

Debate over the management of wolves has included more than two decades of legislation, litigation and rulemaking. Wolf recovery to date has been construed around specific legal questions or science-driven exercises about predicted wolf population status. Courts have invalidated five out of six rules finalized by the Service on gray wolf status, citing at least in part a failure to consider how delisting any particular population of gray wolves affects their status and recovery nationwide.

To accomplish this and address the concern about nationwide recovery for gray wolves, the Service will undertake a process to develop a first-ever nationwide gray wolf recovery plan by December 12, 2025. Recovery plans provide a vision for species recovery that is connected to site-specific actions for reducing threats and conserving listed species and their ecosystems.

Facilitating a more durable and holistic approach to wolf recovery must go beyond the ESA. The Service also recently announced a [new effort](#) to create and foster a national dialogue around how communities can live with gray wolves to include conflict prevention, long-term stability and community security. These discussions, led by a third-party convenor, will help inform the Service’s policies and future rulemaking about wolves, and include those who live with wolves and those who do not but want to know they have a place on the landscape.

States and Tribes have been important partners in managing gray wolves and will remain integral to their long-term conservation and acceptance on the landscape. This is important because the federal government’s legal authority alone cannot address the variety of approaches to wolves that generate conflict. The states of Montana and Idaho recently adopted laws and

regulations designed to substantially reduce the gray wolf populations in their states using means and measures that are at odds with modern professional wildlife management. The steps the Service is outlining today include continued work with state and Tribal partners, including nation-to-nation consultation, to create opportunities to craft enduring solutions that protect wolves and sustain human communities and livelihood.

More information is available on the Service's website including the [12-month finding](#), [Species Status Assessment](#), [Species Assessment Form](#), and [Frequently Asked Questions](#). The finding will be available in the coming days in the *Federal Register* at <https://www.regulations.gov> at Docket No. FWS-HQ-ES-2021-0106.

For additional updates, visit the [gray wolf web page online](#).

## **Fisheries Division: Darren Kramer, Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit**

### **Management Unit Update**

- Lake Superior Management Unit (LSMU) and Habitat Management Unit staff have worked with Upper Peninsula Power Company on a stranded aquatic biota plan for the Victoria Dam tailrace. In June 2024, UPPCO will be drawing down the reservoir to complete dam repairs. During this time, the tailrace will be dry, and the bypass channel will be used. Transfer of fish and mussels will be made when flows switch to the bypass channel. In September, a blocking net will be used to exclude fish from the tailrace while upgrades are being tested. The project is planned to be completed this fall.
- LSMU staff took part in the Lake Superior Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee Meeting in Houghton in mid-April. About 15 members of the public participated in person or online. Robust and largely positive discussions occurred on a variety of topics.
- LSMU staff met with the Keweenaw Sportsmen's Club in Ahmeek in April. The meeting had 40+ in attendance. The Club wanted to learn more about the splake evaluation study, brown trout fishery, and 1842 Tribal fishing.
- Splake clipping was completed at MSFH. Field crews from Newberry and Crystal Falls led the effort with assistance from Marquette Research staff.
- A collaborative effort was required to successfully stock Splake in Mirror Lake in the Porcupine Mountains the week of April 22<sup>nd</sup>, with field staff from Crystal Falls stocking fish out with the assistance of Parks and Rec Staff from Porcupine Mountains State Park.
- The lake sturgeon elevator at the Menominee Dam on the Menominee River was operated from April 22<sup>nd</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>. A total of 294 lake sturgeon were captured with 49 males and 34 females transferred upstream.
- The lake sturgeon streamside rearing facility is prepped and ready to receive fry at Cedar River. The trailer is expected to receive fry from the Menominee River (partnering with UW-Green Bay) sometime during the week of May 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Fish Production Section Update**

- Arctic Grayling egg takes have begun at Marquette State Fish Hatchery. These are 2019 x 2019 crosses that will be used for experimental purposes. Marquette will continue to hone egg take and incubating techniques, these eggs will be transferred to floating basket incubators at Hunt Creek Research Station. Troy Zorn and Carl Ruetz (GVSU – Annis Water Resources Institute) are the principal investigators. Marquette is likely to begin producing eggs, from appropriate crossings, for deployment to remote site incubators in 2025.
- Walleye egg takes were completed on Little Bay de Noc on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> with the first batch of fry ready for stocking out in rearing ponds the week of May 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Research Section Update**

- Lake Char is currently conducting the spring lake trout survey in Lake Superior.
- Walleye jaw tagging on Little Bay de Noc was conducted April 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> with about 300 adult walleyes tagged.
- Lake sturgeon spawning run surveys are ongoing at Sturgeon River (Baraga Co.).
- PIT tag antennas in Cedar and Whitefish rivers have detected lake sturgeon, presumably preparing to spawn, including one sturgeon detected in Cedar River that was originally captured and PIT tagged below the White Rapids Dam, Menominee River, in 2006.

- Traps have been installed at Hunt Creek as preparation continues for Arctic Grayling research that will be a collaboration with Dr. Carl Ruetz at Grand Valley State University.

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

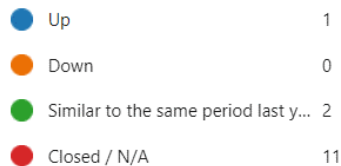
- **CO Jenni Hanson** hosted an ORV Safety course at the Gogebic Community College. Twenty-seven students successfully passed the course and earned their ORV safety certificate.
- **CO Jenni Hanson** assisted the Gogebic County Sheriff's Office in instructing a Marine Safety course at the Wakefield-Marenisco school.
- **CO Jenni Hanson** taught an ORV Safety course to the 6h graders at the Ewen-Trout Creek and Watersmeet schools. Twenty students successfully passed the course and earned their ORV safety certificate.
- **CO Brian Lasanen** conducted a smelting patrol in Houghton and Baraga Counties. CO Lasanen set up and observed a subject using a cast net to harvest smelt. After a short time observing, CO Lasanen contacted the individual. The subject was found to be in possession of a large over-limit of smelt. The subject was cited for possessing more than the two-gallon limit of smelt.
- **CO Brian Lasanen** received a complaint of a landowner using large brush piles to disguise his illegal burning of a mobile home on the property. CO Lasanen attempted contact at the location, but the subject had left before he arrived. CO Lasanen contacted the individual and advised he needed to meet at the location as the brush piles were being burned while unattended. When the subject arrived back at the location, CO Lasanen addressed the violations of unattended burning and the illegal disposal of solid waste.
- **CO Phil Helminen** stopped a side-by-side for having an expired ORV registration. CO Helminen observed there to be an uncased firearm in the ORV and the passenger also had an uncased firearm on a sling around his shoulder. There were several targets and target stands in the back of the ORV. They stated that they were just out target practicing and returning to camp and did not know they needed to have the guns in a case. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Phil Helminen** assisted the Dickinson County Sheriff's Office with the search for a 25-year-old mother and her 5-year-old child. The mother was suffering from a mental health crisis and had left her residence and taken her child into the woods with her at night. The child did not have a jacket or proper clothing for the just above freezing temperatures. After searching for several hours, both the mother and child were located.
- **CO Phil Helminen** attended a hunter safety field day held in Dickinson County. CO Helminen taught the law portion of the class and answered numerous questions from the students and parents in attendance.
- **CO Phil Helminen** was contacted by a homeowner who was concerned someone was turkey hunting with a firearm inside of the safety zone around their residence. CO Helminen located the hunting blind and found it to be well within the safety zone and the blind was pointed back towards the residence so the hunter would be facing the homeowners house when shooting. The next day, CO Helminen located the hunter in the blind and informed him of the safety zone violation. The hunter said they thought they were far enough away and that they were being safe. Enforcement action was taken for the safety zone violation.
- **COs Alex VanWagner, Zach Painter, and Pete Shambaugh** instructed a hunters education class at the Ontonagon School with the 6th grade class. The students were very interactive and participated well throughout the day.
- **CO Anna Viau** partnered with the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission and presented to approximately 50 staff members of the US Fish and Wildlife Service Sea Lamprey Control Program in Marquette about methods of verbal de-escalation on the job. Sea lamprey control staff often deal with members of the public who are unhappy with various natural resources issues, even if the issues are unrelated to lamprey control.
- **COs John Kamps and Jackson Kelly** assisted the MSP with a fleeing domestic violence suspect. After violating a personal protection order and a domestic violence assault, the suspect fled on foot into forest as CO Kamps and the MSP arrived on scene. K9 was called in, and after a mile long track and recovering the suspect GPS ankle monitor hidden in a tree, the track ended at a nearby roadway. It was determined that the suspect was picked up by a vehicle and left the scene. A short time later, the officers received a tip that he was at a residence several miles away. Before the officers arrived on scene, the suspect again fled on foot into the woods. Another K9 track was started and after a two-mile-long foot pursuit, the suspect was located. He was taken into custody without incident. The suspect was lodged in the Marquette County Jail on several violations.

- **COs Jeremy Sergey and Jackson Kelly** were instructing a hunter safety class when they received a report that an individual was fishing on the Silver Lead creek before trout season began. The COs quickly responded and located the individual on the Silver Lead creek. The COs explained to the individual the stream was closed until April 27th. When asked for his fishing license, the individual stated they thought they only needed a license if they kept any fish. A citation was issued along with a warning for fishing on a closed trout stream.
- **COs Jeremy Sergey, Jackson Kelly, Cody Smith, and Sgt. Mark Leadman** conducted a field day for hunter safety at the Marquette DNR Customer Service Center. Cpl. Doug Hermanson tested and certified the 24 students who attended.

## Parks & Recreation Division: Doug Rich, WUP District Supervisor

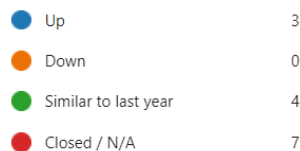
### Camping

Lake Gogebic Traveling Construction Crew	The Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew created-renovated sink cabinet in Van Riper's toilet shower building in April.
McLain State Park	McLain continues to move forward with Sewage Lagoon Project, bidding open in May
Baraga Field Office	Removed some downed trees after high winds / heavy wet snow at Baraga SP.
Escanaba Field Office	Although there were few campers during this period, there were some. Weather allowed access into unit SFCGs sooner than normal
Craig Lake State Park	Craig Lake State Park is closed for the season until May 20th.



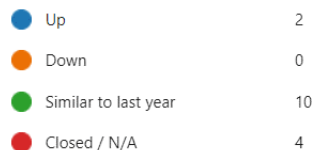
### Overnight Lodging

Little Presque Isle State Forest RA	No significant changes regarding overnight lodging at Little Presque Isle State Forest Tract within the area managed by Van Riper State Park. The lack of snow may have brought a few additional visitors; however, the cabins are only up 13 camp nights from this time frame last year.
Van Riper State Park	The only overnight lodging option within Van Riper State Park, the Peshekee River Rustic Cabin, has seen an increase of 31 camp nights in 2024 from March and April.
Lake Gogebic Traveling Construction Crew	The Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew began removal and replacing windows and siding at the historic Miller cabin in Craig Lake SP.
Craig Lake State Park	No significant changes from last year. Craig Lake State Park's overnight lodging was only up 6 camp nights from the same time frame last year.




### Boating Access Sites and Harbors

Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park	Big Iron River BAS water level is extremely low, and the courtesy pier has been getting silted in.
Little Presque Isle State Forest RA	With the lack of snow, the Harlow Lake BAS site may have seen a little additional use and early season melting, but not anything to report out.
Van Riper State Park	Boating numbers have been up a little within the Van Riper State Park unit due to lack of snowfall and early ice melting this year.
Baraga Field Office	Due to the early spring, Baraga Field Office Staff was able to push in courtesy piers throughout Baraga, Houghton, and Marquette Counties. Staff completed necessary preventative maintenance on equipment. Constructed and installed a stormwater basin at McLain State Park. In addition, made repairs to the Cisco Lake BAS in Gogebic County.




REPAIRED RAMP AT CISCO LAKE BAS IN GOGEBIC COUNTY

## Trails

Twin Lakes State Park	Spring sport ride coming up on June 8th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: blue;">●</span> Up 2</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">●</span> Down 0</li> <li><span style="color: green;">●</span> Similar to last year 12</li> <li><span style="color: red;">●</span> Closed / N/A 2</li> </ul> 
Baraga State Park	There has been an increase in use on the park's non-motorized trail and use of the park's campground roads for general walking while the campground is closed.	
Little Presque Isle State Forest RA	Trail uses year-round in the Little Presque Isle State Forest Tract (Van Riper State Park managed) typically sees the same used numbers from year to year, regardless of the weather or snow conditions.	
Bewabic State Park	Continued work transitioning snowmobile program to PRD.	
Craig Lake State Park	With the lack of snow at Craig Lake State Park, trails received more and earlier use this season than in the same time frame for last year.	

## Day Use

McLain State Park	Warmer Spring Weather has brought in more day users than previous springs at McLain. Playground equipment is ordered and should be arriving in May and hopefully installed in 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: blue;">●</span> Up 3</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">●</span> Down 0</li> <li><span style="color: green;">●</span> Similar to last year 10</li> <li><span style="color: red;">●</span> Closed / N/A 5</li> </ul> 
Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park	The early spring allowed up to open the three Scenic Sites inside the park earlier than usual.	
Lake Gogebic Traveling Construction Crew	The Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew repaired and replaced decking, rails, and beams on the boardwalk at Wagner Falls Scenic Site in April.	
Bewabic State Park	Continue work on ARPA projects at Bewabic State Park.	
Bond Falls Scenic Site	Early spring weather has many visitors coming accessing the site via the walking trail via the county road. There were many calls in March and April inquiring about early opening for vehicle access to the site (opened 5/7, earlier than normal).	
Craig Lake State Park	Day use activities are also up from the same time frame last year due to less and earlier snowmelt and earlier access into Craig Lake State Park.	
Van Riper State Park	There haven't been any significant changes in day use numbers in Van Riper State Park for this March and April time frame.	

## Design, Construction, Capital Outlay and ARPA Projects

Lake Gogebic State Park	Design for Lake Gogebic State Park improvements continues. This is being funded with ARPA money.
McLain State Park	McLain Has a closure on Campground starting August 1 for the Lagoon project. The aging electrical power system has forced us to shut off the power to sites 1-91 at McLain while park staff continue to try and come up with a fix.
Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park	Multiple ARPA projects are in various states of progress.
Little Presque Isle State Forest RA	Little Presque Isle State Forest Tract (Van Riper State Park managed area) progress meetings have continued to move forward with planning and purchasing while waiting for the construction season to start. This work is only being done on existing trails within the unit.
Menominee River State RA	Waiting on phase 300 bridge/ADA pathway at Piers Gorge Unit.
Fort Wilkins Historic State Park	West campground toilet shower project scheduled for August 2024.
Bewabic State Park	Four monitoring wells were drilled for ongoing waste-water ARPA project at Bewabic State Park. Survey work was also completed in the campground for relocation of a new toilet/shower building, also an ARPA project.
Craig Lake State Park	Progress on the renovation of the Large Cabin in Craig Lake State Park is coming along well. Park staff as well as staff from other units have spent many weeks getting ready for the exciting National Guard Partnership work coming in early June.
Van Riper State Park	There are many construction/capital outlay projects that have been a work in progress for the Van Riper State Park Unit in the past couple of months. The Michigan Iron Industry Museum had its mandatory pre-bid meeting for the repair/replacement of portions of the museum roof, parking area repairs regarding a slump of the entrance road due to heavy rain events in the spring of



	2023, and replacement of certain furnace components in the museum areas. The Overlook Trail Earthen Stair Replacement Project is moving forward this spring as a bid has been accepted and awarded. The wastewater system at Van Riper will also see some repairs/replacement of the pumps, elbows, and rails in the central lift station in the park and the repair/replacement of 2 valves that broke in the fall in the central lagoon valve housing. These types of projects will help to enhance both visitor and staff experiences and assist in keeping the integrity of the infrastructure intact.
Baraga State Park	Park staff is working with MIARNG staff on the upcoming playground build. The site has been staked out, old playground equipment has been removed and the site is ready for grounds preparation which will start in May.
Twin Lakes State Park	Waiting for construction bids to be released on the Enclosed shelter project

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

Lake Gogebic Traveling Construction Crew	The Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew have been planning and working with Van Riper and Baraga State parks in the partnership between MDNR Parks and Recreation and the Michigan Army National Guard for their Innovative Readiness Training scheduled to begin at the end of May.
Van Riper State Park	A concession contract has been awarded to Simple Adventures to once again open the beach store at Van Riper for the summer of 2024.
Bewabic State Park	Interviewed one candidate for the new Lead worker position at Bewabic State Park, hiring candidate is still in progress.
Menominee River State RA	Interviewed for vacant seasonal ranger position, in process of hiring candidate.
Baraga State Park	SPW hiring and hiring for the vacant maintenance ranger position has been a challenge. The vacant ranger position was reposted, and interviews have been scheduled for 5/21. Our commissioned seasonal ranger position is also vacant and has been posted.
Baraga Field Office	John Robillard (Lead Equipment Operator) at the Baraga Construction Crew has announced his retirement at the end of May. John has over 36 years of service to Michigan's DNR.

### **Forest Resources Division: Tom Seablom, Western UP District Supervisor**

- Field work for the 2026 YOE Inventory season continues. The next WUP Open house will be for the Escanaba unit on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and for the Gwinn unit on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Open House and Compartment Review schedules for the 2026 YOE are posted online under the Public Input section along with other state forest inventory information at: [Michigan.Gov/Forestinput](https://Michigan.Gov/Forestinput).
- As of May 17<sup>th</sup>, 320 timber sale contracts are open WUP Wide. This represents 1,019,243 cords of timber on 55,820 acres, valued at approximately \$36.8 million. Included in this are 27 GNA sales representing 114,528 cords of timber on 5,941 acres, valued at approximately \$3.5 million. As of March 12<sup>th</sup>, 6 sales are available WUP Wide for the minimum advertised price. This represents 19,997 cords of timber. Find more information on State Forest timber sales at: [Michigan.Gov/Timber](https://Michigan.Gov/Timber).
- WUP Units are reporting 20 Active Timber Sales in the WUP totaling about 1,991 acres. Units report moderate interest in timber sales, especially when they have good access on high quality sites.
- Units have been finishing forest inventory work and starting on the 2024FY timber harvest plan with about 48,026 acres planned for treatment statewide of that 12,010 acres are in the WUP.
- The fire protection staff have responded to 30 reportable wildfires totaling 70 acres. The department has conducted 3 prescribed burns in the WUP to improve wildlife habitat treating approximately 118 acres.
- Spring fire season is well underway with the Memorial Day holiday being the official kickoff into the summer season. Normal fire activity is expected through the month of May for Michigan. The month of June is showing significant wildfire potential for the west half of the UP. Currently the months of July and August are trending towards normal. No staff are currently out of state on western fire dispatch.

- WUP cultivation work started in May. Approximately 280 acres will be planted this spring. 1,300 acres are scheduled to be prepared for planting in the future.
- Open enrollment for the Commercial Forest Program ended April 1<sup>st</sup>. Commercial Forest staff is working on preparing for spring-summer inspections of new enrollment applications. For more information on the Commercial Forest Program go to [Michigan.Gov/Commercialforest](https://Michigan.Gov/Commercialforest).
- Forest Health Program staff been surveying for hemlock woolly adelgid in high-risk areas of the UP, especially the garden peninsula. No positive detections have occurred in the UP, however detections continue to occur further north in the LP along the Lake Michigan shoreline into Benzie County.

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

### **Trail Specialist: Jeff Kakuk, Western Upper Peninsula**

#### **Snowmobile Trails**

- PRD continues to transition to full grant sponsor oversight for the upcoming 24/25 snow season.
- Special maintenance projects are in process as well as planning for re-routes and work arounds for trail connections in the upcoming season.

#### **ORV Trails**

- Grant sponsors are out maintaining the trail network and beginning construction projects.
- Pre-prevailing wage rates have been provided to all WUP ORV sponsors to ensure that forward momentum with project award remains possible. This is and will be a learning curve for both DNR and Sponsors to which we are working together to meet the law requirements.

#### **Multi-Use Trails**

- Trail infrastructure failure continues to occur and impact many of the trail systems within the WUP. This trend should be expected due to age and condition of the system.
- With construction season upon us, there is a lot of work in planning and occurring on our trail systems. It is hoped that the mild winter/spring will allow for great start to trail improvements this year.

#### **General Updates**

- Public Act 10 of 2023 restored Prevailing Wage requirements for public projects financed by the State. This law took effect on February 13<sup>th</sup> and will apply to all grant funded projects that our Trail Sponsors administer. Sponsors and DNR are working purposefully to meet this new law requirement while ensuring that trail work continues to move forward.

### **Trail Specialist: Rob Katona, Central Upper Peninsula**

<b>Project Name: ORV Route Grading Alger, Delta, Marquette, Menominee, and Dickinson Counties</b>	<b>Project Name: Snowmobile Trail 2 Dickinson County Bridges/Culverts</b>	<b>Project Name: Nahma Grade Multi-use Trail</b>	<b>Project Name: Clowry Grade Bridge #6</b>
Description: Multiple projects for grading and smoothing ORV routes with multiple grades planned in high use areas to help prevent rough routes.	Description: Replace two bridges with large bottomless culverts or new bridges depending on EGLE permit.	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 & ORV Routes	Trail Use:	Trail Use: Rail Trails	Trail Use: Rail Trails
Anticipated Completion: Summer/Fall 2024	Anticipated Completion: Fall 2024	Anticipated Completion: Summer/Fall 2024	Anticipated Completion: November 2023

Q3 Update: Some projects have been awarded to contractors, others are being prepared to advertise.	Q3 Update: Project was awarded.	Q3 Update: Going through DTMB process as AGY project.	Q3 Update: Design is near 100% Will need additional funding for construction.
---	------------------------------------	--	--

<b>Project Name: Clowry Grade Bridges #1, #4, #5 &amp; #7.</b>	<b>Project Name: Clowry ORV Improvements</b>	<b>Project Name: Little Presque Isle Rec Area Improvements</b>	<b>Project Name: Days River Single Track Trail Construction</b>
Description: Design and rehab/construction of multiple bridges on this designated ORV/snowmobile multi-use Rail-Trail in Marquette County.	Description: Continue filling low areas and culvert replacements 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: TBD	Anticipated Completion: Fall 2024	Anticipated Completion: October 2024	Anticipated Completion: 2025
Q3 Update: No new updates.	Q3 Update: Project is being prepared to advertise.	Q3 Update: Construction has begun.	Q3 Update: Tentative letting is now later, late fall.

<b>Project Name: Tyoga Pathway Bridges</b>	<b>Project Name: LPI Songbird Trail and Harlow Creek Bridges</b>	<b>Project Name: Laughing Whitefish Falls Bridge</b>	<b>Project Name: Genes Pond Pathway</b>
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: New pedestrian bridge construction on NCT over Laughing Whitefish River at the Laughing Whitefish Falls Natural Area.	Description: Construction of 1.75 mile accessible pathway with scenic overlooks adjacent to state forest campground located near Ralph in Dickinson County.
Trail Use: Nonmotorized	Trail Use: Nonmotorized	Trail Use: Nonmotorized	Trail Use: Nonmotorized
Anticipated Completion: TBD	Anticipated Completion: TBD	Anticipated Completion: TBD	Anticipated Completion: 2025
Q3 Update: No new updates.	Q3 Update: No new updates.	Q3 Update: No new updates.	Q3 Update: Design is complete going through final MDOT process before letting which is now tentative for late summer.

<b>Project Name: Forest Islands Trailhead Improvements</b>	<b>Project Name: Felch Grade Surface Improvements III</b>	<b>Project Name: Gwinn-Arnold Improvements and Restoration IV</b>	<b>Project Name: Marquette County ORV Routes Improvements</b>
Description: Using remaining funds from open contract to improve two trailheads on this trail system. Work includes expanding parking, filling low areas, constructing a picnic area with tables and grills and creating accessible walkways to new picnic area and facilities.	Description: Gravel capping on the Felch Grade in Menominee and Delta Counties	Description: ORV G route Marquette County filling, gravel, and culvert work.	Description: Repair large holes replace culverts and surfacing on multiple ORV routes in Marquette County
Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV
Anticipated Completion: Summer 2024	Anticipated Completion: Summer/Fall 2024	Anticipated Completion: Summer/Fall 2024	Anticipated Completion: Summer/Fall 2024
Q3 Update: Work has begun.	Q3 Update: Work has been completed in dust control areas working on scopes for other projects.	Q3 Update: No new updates.	Q3 Update: No new updates.

<b>Project Name: Delta-Menominee ORV Routes Improvements</b>	<b>Project Name: Central U.P. ORV Route Dust Control</b>	<b>PROPOSAL: Hiawatha NF ORV Routes Proposal</b>	<b>PROPOSAL: Ishpeming-Negaunee-Sands ORV Routes Proposal</b>
Description: Minor bridge railing and decking repairs on Felch Grade, 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: ORV routes that would provide connectivity to several communities and looped riding opportunities in central Marquette County. Proposals are pending securing land permissions and/or trail easements.
Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: ORV
Anticipated Completion: September 2024	Anticipated Completion: June 2024	Anticipated Completion: TBD	Anticipated Completion: TBD
Q3 Update: Some work has been completed and others awarded to contract.	Q3 Update: May need to readvertise we did not receive any bids.	Q3 Update: Scheduling a meeting with USFS to inform new USFS staff.	Q3 Update: Meetings scheduled with Negaunee & Ishpeming to discuss proposal, reached out to MCRC. Received initial approval from MDOT for ORV connector on M35.

<b>PROPOSAL: Negaunee ORV Extension</b>	<b>PROPOSAL: Little Lake – Chatham RR grade ORV Route Proposal</b>	<b>PROPOSAL: Westwood Pathway</b>	<b>PROPOSAL: Eagle Mills-Gwinn-Little Lake ORV Route Proposal</b>
Description: Extend ORV route in Negaunee along IOHT to provide legal RR crossing and access to roads/routes open to ORVs to the east. Work will include new trail construction and large culvert installation. Snowmobile trail will be relocated off of non-motorized IOHT to new trail segment.	Description: ORV Designate segments of existing RR grade and county roads to provide ORV connectivity between Chatham and Little Lake and beyond.	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: ORV & Snowmobile	Trail Use: ORV	Trail Use: Non-motorized Pathway	Trail Use: ORV
Anticipated Completion: 2025	Anticipated Completion: Proposal submitted Summer/Fall 2024	Anticipated Completion: Summer 2024	Anticipated Completion: Summer 2024
Q3 Update: EGLE permit secured, property was purchased and per-bid meeting for construction is end of May.	Q3 Update: Analysis complete, waiting on AG to review and provide opinion.	Q3 Update: No new updates.	Q3 Update: Trail proposal was entered and is nearly complete.

## **Wildlife Division: Dave Lemmien, UP Wildlife Supervisor**

### **Staffing Update**

- Each Unit in the Upper Peninsula (UP) has hired a non-career wildlife assistant (NCWA) to help with various tasks throughout the summer months and the new hires have been onboarding over the past week. NCWA's typically help with nuisance bear issues, sick and injured wildlife, habitat projects and crop damage complaints among other things.
- Interviews to fill the vacant Baraga Wildlife Technician Position have been held. Hoping to be onboarding a new employee by shortly.

### **2024 Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative (DHIPI)**

- The Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative (DHIPI) is a competitive grant program offered by Wildlife Division and focuses on cooperative projects enhancing deer habitat on private lands in the UP. Now in its' sixteenth year, over \$1,150,000.00 of deer hunting license dollars have been invested into UP deer habitat through the DHIPI program, with an additional \$800,000 of matching funds contributed through partners in over 132 projects; enhancing thousands of acres of deer habitat in nearly all UP counties.
- The grant process has closed, and we received over 20 applications for the 2024 cycle. Grants awarded in 2024 will range from a minimum of \$2,000 to a maximum of \$15,000 and require a 25% project match from partners in the form of financial or in-kind contributions.
- This year 16 grants this year in full. The Division made available additional grant money to the UP Region thus we are funding a total of \$129,476 this season.
- The next steps are generating the grant paperwork which applicants need to sign before they can commence any work on the projects. This will include any modifications or suggestions that the selection committee identified during their review. We will try and complete that task by the end of May.

### **2024 Wildlife Habitat Grant Program**

- The Wildlife Habitat Grant Program began in October 2013 and is funded from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. The DNR administers the program with the main objective to enhance and improve the quality and quantity of wildlife species habitat in support of the [Wildlife Division's strategic plan](#). Funding is available for local, state, federal and tribal governments, profit and nonprofit groups, and individuals through an open competitive process. Minimum grant amounts will be set at \$15,000, with the maximum being the amount of funds available for that grant cycle. The 2024 overall available grant amount is approximately \$1 million.
- There were 16 applications from the UP. The selection committee is working on finalizing the selection process and announcement of successful grant applicants will be announced soon.

### **UP Winter Wolf Survey**

- UP staff were involved in conducting the winter wolf track survey to determine an UP minimum count. The survey is a stratified random sample design with 13 of 21 units being surveyed this year. The survey requires staff to survey predefined areas using vehicles, snowmobiles, etc., to count and distinguish packs. Staff were successful in completing the survey even with the lack of snowfall to help in tracking. Additional time was spent in planning efforts due to the lack of snowfall this winter. Staff should be commended for accomplishing this task since conditions were less than desirable.

### **Other Updates**

- Wildlife staff have been busy the past few weeks conducting woodcock, sharp tail grouse and ruffed grouse surveys. participating in wildland fire academy trainings in preparation for the 2024 fire season.
- Wildlife staff have been preparing for the spring planting season in regard to our maintained openings.
- Staff are currently planning other spring projects, outreach programs, developing project contracts.