



Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

Date of Production: September 2023 (Information current as of 8/30/2023)

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

DNR Public Meetings – Future Dates

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.

September 6	Western UP Citizens' Advisory Council Meeting, 6pm, Houghton, 906-226-1331
September 10	Snowmobile Advisory Workgroup, 10:30am, 517-331-6219
September 12	Accessibility Advisory Council, 9am, 517-284-5958
September 12	Equine Trails Subcommittee, 10am, 517-331-6219
September 14	Michigan Natural Resources Commission, Lansing, 9am, NRC@michigan.gov
September 21	Board of Foresters, 9am, 989-370-9557
September 22	Timber and Forest Products Advisory Council, 10am, 517-482-3220
September 28	Lake Superior Citizens' Fishery Advisory Committee, 6:30pm EDT, 231-330-5290
September 28	Trails Advisory Council, 1pm, 517-331-6219
October 11	Joint UP Citizens' Advisory Council Meeting, 3-5pm, Escanaba, 906-226-1331
October 12	Michigan Natural Resources Commission, Escanaba , 9am, NRC@michigan.gov

U.P. 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](#)

Aug 30-Sep 1	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park – Beginning Backpacking in the Porkies
Sep 15-16	Fayette Historic State Park – A Paranormal Event
Sep 15-17	Van Riper State Park – Harvest Fest Weekend
Sep 22-24	Van Riper State Park – Harvest Fest Weekend
Sep 22-23	Wells State Park – Harvest Festival
Sep 23	Brimley State Park – Harvest Festival
Sept 29-30	Tahquamenon Falls State Park – Harvest Festival
October 7	Fayette Historic State Park – Fayette Fall Fest

Recent DNR Press Releases

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

- Showcasing the DNR: Expanding mental health mission of COs (8/24/23)
- Michigan Sharp-tailed Grouse Association to hold annual meeting (8/23/23)
- Two more invasives to look for in Michigan (8/22/23)
- DNR to hold oil and gas lease auction Oct. 24 (8/22/23)
- DNR, partners battling Goose Marsh Fire in Chippewa County (8/16/23)
- Fall turkey drawing results available now (8/14/23)
- Deadline extended: Apply for tree planting grants by Aug. 18 (8/14/23)
- Showcasing the DNR: Seizing a summer day (8/10/23)

- Free ORV Weekend almost here, brush up on safety (8/9/23)
- Heading outdoors? Take 10 to check trees for invasive Asian longhorned beetle (8/9/23)
- Oct. public meeting regarding metallic mineral lease application (8/8/23)
- August hunting and trapping opportunities (8/8/23)
- DNR News: Big Tree Hunt, buggy videos, NRC meeting, things to do & more (8/7/23)

Grant Contacts

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

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

August NRC Meeting Summary – Ed Golder, Public Information Officer

The Natural Resources Commission met on the downtown campus of Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids on August 10, 2023. Acting Director Shannon Lott approved six land transactions. Details can be found in [the NRC agenda](#).

Director's Report, Committee of the Whole

Erik Eklund, chief of the Finance and Operations Division, gave an overview of the DNR's Fiscal Year 2024 Budget, which was signed by the governor late last month. Director Lot said this is the largest budget in the department's history. The \$572.2 million budget includes \$81.1 million in General Fund dollars. Director Lott sent an agency wide email on July 30 that detailed investments in this year's budget.

Seth Herbst from Fisheries [informed the commission about Fisheries Orders that will be before the commission for action at next month's meeting](#). Several of the regulations are meant to liberalize angler opportunity and provide clarity to existing regulations, Seth said. Proposed changes include:

- [Fisheries Order 206.23A](#), which would add clarity to regulations on northern pike, and allow anglers on select waters to keep up to five pike daily, with only one 24 inches or greater.
- [Fisheries Order 215.23A](#): which would increase clarity on regulations that allow for expanded walleye opportunity on the Lower Saginaw River.
- [Fisheries Order 219.23](#), which would make editorial changes to underwater spearfishing regulations for clarity.
- [Fisheries Orders 219.23 and 229.23](#), which would make editorial modifications to a boundary contained in those orders to account for a recent street name change in Mackinac County.
- [Fisheries Order 240.23](#), which would increase opportunities for Lake Sturgeon. The change would allow catch-and-immediate-release of Lake Sturgeon in the Ontonagon River in Ontonagon County, from Lake Superior to Victoria Dam Road from July 16 to March 15. This change is not anticipated to result in biological harm to the Lake Sturgeon population.

[A report on legislation affecting the department](#) was provided to the commission (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 517-331-7792 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 Natural Resources Commission webpage (www.michigan.gov/NRC).

August 2023 Legislative Updates – Legislative & Legal Affairs Office

SB 52 – Eliminate Penal Code Violation for Not Reporting a Deer Harvest within 72 Hours – Sen. Cherry: This bill amends Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to eliminate the misdemeanor penal code violation for not reporting a deer harvest or not retaining a deer harvest confirmation number.

- The bill was signed by the Governor on 7/18/2023, becoming PA 55 of 2023 with immediate effect.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

SB 59 – Modify Definition of a Peace Officer in the Mental Health Code – Sen. Cherry: This bill would amend the Mental Health Code, Act 258 of 1974, to modify the definition of a peace officer by adding an officer or agency who is licensed under the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES), Act 203 of 1965. The changes to this bill would allow an expansion of officers, including Conservation Officers, able to engage with a person requiring treatment under the Mental Health Code.

- The bill was signed by the Governor on 7/18/2023, becoming PA 56 of 2023 with immediate effect.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

SB 441 – Provides Management and Regulation of State and Tribal Fisheries – Sen. Shink: This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to update the requirements and penalties for submitting catch activity reports by fishing charter boats.

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

HB 4855 – Amend Membership on Wolf Management Advisory Council – Rep. Aiyash: This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to modify the membership of the Wolf Management Advisory Council within the DNR. This includes two members representing organizations that promote conservation in the state, and one member with a master's degree in zoology, wildlife management or a related discipline of science.

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

HB 4856 – Amend Membership on Michigan Wildlife Council – Rep. Mentzer: This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to modify the membership of the Michigan Wildlife Council to include 4 additional individuals with expertise in wildlife issues, habitat, or management (2), representing a tribal government in the state (1) and a master's degree in zoology, wildlife management or a related discipline of science (1).

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

If you would like to learn more about these and other bills, go to: [Michigan Legislative Bills](#).

Eastern UPCAC Update

The **Eastern UP Citizens' Advisory Council** met on August 2 in Munising. Division reports were reviewed, and several questions were asked by the Council on various items in the reports. Under the standing agenda item of wolf management update, discussion focused on NRC Chair Baird's plan to develop a decision tree to utilize when wolves are delisted. Cormorant funding and control was also discussed under Old Business. Under New Business, the Council

received an update on the nuisance regulation changes and presentations on the DNR's Marketing and Outreach Division responsibilities and Forest Resources Division infrastructure investments in the eastern UP. Committee reports were provided by the Fisheries Committee (decreased hatchery production of walleye), Wildlife Committee (crossbow use in December for southern areas of the UP) and Policy Impact Committee (SB 456, 457, HB 4855 and 4856).

Both the Eastern and Western UP Citizens' Advisory Councils will meet at their annual Joint UPCAC Meeting on Wednesday, October 11 in Escanaba from 3-5pm (location TBD). This meeting coincides with the yearly NRC Meeting in the UP, also being held in Escanaba at Bay College, the next day on October 12 beginning at 9am. A Coffee with the Commissioners will be held just before the NRC Meeting from 8-9am. Please plan to attend these meetings!

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

Division Updates

Fisheries Division: Darren Kramer, Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit

Management Unit Update

- Staff attended the annual lake habitat workshop on Chicagon Lake (Iron County) hosted by the Iron County Lakes & Stream Partnership in July. Every year Jo Latimore, aquatic ecologist, and Erick Elgin, limnologist, from Michigan State University Extension visit Iron County to tour lakes and have conversations about important aspects of lake health with interested constituents.
- Cedar River streamside rearing facility (Lake sturgeon): Mortalities have subsided at the SRF and there are 216 juvenile lake sturgeon in the facility. The unit STW (Alyssa Groeneveld) has done a great job at the facility and is leaving in August for a fulltime job in Idaho. Fortunately, the FWS (Green Bay FWCO) has capacity to put more personnel resources into the SRF, so there will be no drop off in time or effort caring for the fish until they are released in September.
- Bids were sought to oversee permitting and draw down of the Black River Dam (Gogebic) so that the water level control boards could be replaced. An onsite pre-bid meeting was held that was attended by three contractors. Fisheries Division will work to develop an EGLE permit application which may require wetland delineation.
- Staff partnered with Wisconsin DNR to complete a lake sturgeon survey in the Menominee River from Sturgeon Falls downstream to Faithorn in late August. Electrofishing boats were used to capture fish, biodata taken, and fish were released back to the river after tagging. This is a long-term survey effort led by WDNR and Michigan DNR staff have assisted for over 20 years.

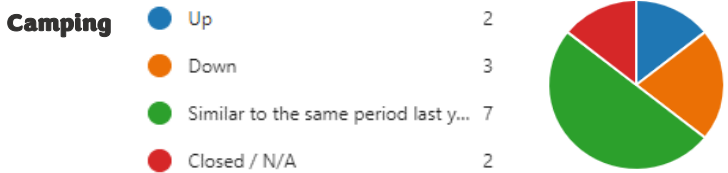
Fish Production Section Update

- All six solar arrays are now fully installed at the hatcheries (including Thompson and Marquette) and four are generating power. It is estimated that the six arrays will save an estimated \$90,000 per year in utility expenditures. The next few months should provide a good indication if that estimate is accurate, although the persistent haze from the Canadian wildfires may reduce the savings somewhat.

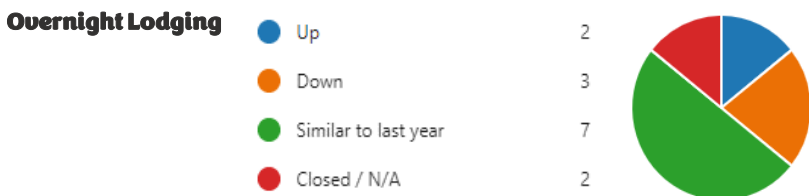
Research Section update

- Staff traveled downstate to assist with a 3-week juvenile lake sturgeon survey on Black Lake located in the northern lower peninsula. The survey efforts resulted in capturing approximately 500 fish. Data analysis is getting underway. The survey was a cooperative effort including Gaylord DNR, Tribal Coordination Unit staff, Marquette Fisheries Research Station, and Little Traverse Bay Band Natural Resources staff.
- Staff completed stream electrofishing surveys in several Upper Peninsula streams during July to implement a project focused on assessing the impacts of beaver dams on fish communities. This is a collaborative project with WDNR and USFWS.

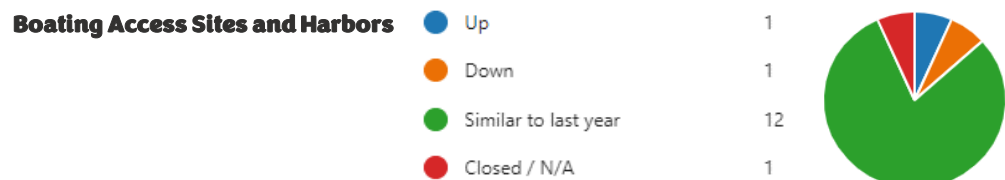
Parks & Recreation Division: Doug Rich, WUP District Supervisor



Twin Lakes	July month was near full but with the park remaining open and not closing on Aug 1 due to construction the month has been much slower. with reservations only opening up on the last week of the month of July we have seen much slower weekdays.
Bewabic	Completed a lot of roadside brushing
Escanaba FO	All State Forest Campgrounds have been slower this season than the past few seasons. They are likely on par with pre 2019 nights
Craig Lake	Camping numbers for the 2023 are the first concrete numbers that staff have seen. With the park going fully reservable with the backcountry campsites, staff is now able to view occupancy and pull more accurate reports on camping numbers. This is AMAZING for staff to see and use!
Lake Gogebic	The park has been consistently filling on the weekends throughout July and August. Usage also remains very high during the weekdays.
Baraga	Camping was similar to the past two years. We had many non-holiday days that we were full and turning away campers. State Forest Campgrounds have also been busy, and we have seen an increase the need for more routine presence at these sites.
Van Riper	Camping was down less than 1% for the July and August 2023 timeframe from the same 2022 timeframe at Van Riper State Park.

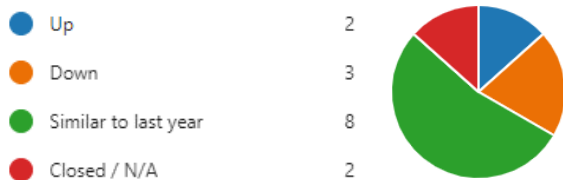


Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew	The crew installed deck skirting on the Lake Gogebic Tiny house in August. They also completed site prep for a host site storage shed.
Little Presque Isle	There have been no significant changes to the overnight lodging. Overall, the overnight lodging nights are only down 1%.
McLain	Lodging is back open at McLain after the construction work is done.
Baraga	Mini cabin use remains steady. Lansing staff recently visited to look at further options to potentially add contract lodging at Baraga to the next RFP.



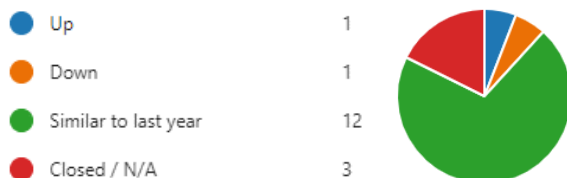
Baraga FO	Hauled gravel for roads and parking areas and graded at Lake Angeline, Lake Michigamme and Goose Lake BAS sites. Hauled gravel for Craig Lake MI Army National Guard project.
Escanaba FO	Various projects at unit BAS sites have been completed, as well as other units BAS including vault toilet replacements, road maintenance, and brushing
Bewabic	Faithorn BAS got a new vault and toilet building. EFO also cleaned up old vault toilet destroyed by high winds.
Cedar River	Final completion of the fuel dock at Cedar river harbor.
Eagle Harbor	Eagle Harbor Marina upgrades continue.
Baraga SP	Sites have been busy, seeing an increase in users, supply needs and trash at some sites.
Van Riper SP	Boating is down a little bit, simply due to closures to make facility improvements.

Trails



Porcupine Mountains	Day use at trailheads seems to be slightly down from last year.
Twin Lakes	With trail closures for the months of July and August, there have been less riders.
Lake Gogebic SP	Work continues throughout July and August with the snowmobile trails program, attending club meetings, reviewing trail changes, and confirming the balances on open grants in preparation for the September spending deadlines.
Escanaba FO	Delta County Non-Motorized Trails club has continued to do maintenance and improvements on both the Days River Pathway, and the Days River singletrack trails
McLain	A lot of closures in the Keweenaw and Lake Linden area trails as construction continues.
Wells SP	Completion of Cedar River North SFCG trail improvements.
Craig Lake	Staff is still struggling to finish up trail clearing at Craig Lake State Park, following the late heavy snow, as summer staffing is gearing up to head back to school.
Little Presque Isle	Trail improvements are now in their bidding phase. Once complete, a contract can be awarded, and hopefully the contractors are able to begin construction as early as this fall.
Baraga	The non-motorized trail that connects Baraga State Park to the Village of Baraga through multiple funding sources, including a MNRTF grant, has made significant progress. It is now paved, and users can go all the way through the Village of Baraga to the park. Upcoming projects will include signage, kiosks, lighting, and a bike repair station.

Day Use



Baraga FO	Installed two vault toilets at McLain State Park
Bond Falls	Bond Falls has been busy, however numbers our have dipped a bit from the past high years. We have had a few event permit weddings and continue to get calls for more.
Baraga	We have seen an increase in day use at State Forest Campgrounds, most notably Big Lake and Big Eric's Bridge, fishing, and lake/beach use.

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

Porkies	The 17th Annual Porcupine Mountain Music Festival will occur August 25 -26th. The National Guard removed and built a new wooden bridge on the cross-country ski trail over Jameson Creek and removed failing sidewalks alongside the mechanic's shop. Rangers have responded to 11 Search and Rescues in July and August.
Twin Lakes	Hosts for July did a wonderful Job, a great fishing program was held in August by McLain State Park's Explorer Guide.
Van Riper	The vacant accounting assistant position has finally been filled! Kathy Johnson from Ishpeming joined us on Monday, July 24. Kathy is doing a great job and the other administrative support staff in the district have been working together to help Kathy learn all of her job duties!
Craig Lake	The park is welcoming its first Seasonal Ranger position as Matena Coron has accepted the position and will start in this capacity in September. Congratulations Matena!
Lake Gogebic Field Crew	The crew performed upgrades and repairs to the headquarters building at McLain. They installed a new door, window, and made repairs to the framing of the office area. They also installed a stone facade around the building.
Baraga SP	The vacant Lead Ranger 9 position was filled by Danny Noble, the park's maintenance ranger, now leaving a non-commissioned Ranger 8 position vacant. The position has been posted and we hope to fill that position soon. STW staff are beginning to leave for the season and staffing the park is becoming a significant challenge.
Bond Falls	We have been fortunate to have adequate staff to this point for Bond Falls, but as STW's depart for the season, we will need to retract some of the Bond Falls STW staff to Baraga SP to cover vacant positions there as we continue to try to maintain core operations at both facilities, utilizing staff as effectively as possible.
Fort Wilkins	Hosted the return of Battery D Re-enactment as part of our 100-year Fort Wilkins State Park Anniversary STW hiring has been a challenge this year.
Bewabic SP	A candidate has been offered the open Permanent Intermittent ranger position at Bewabic State Park. Both commissioned ranger positions at Bewabic/MRSRA have been vacant for the entire camping season.

Design, Construction, Capital Outlay and ARPA Projects

Porcupine Mountains	HQ and VC road construction is underway. The Staff Quarters is currently being remodeled. VC design work is underway. Ski Hill design study is underway. The Lake Superior Sportsman's club is nearing completing.
Menominee River	Meetings have begun on MNRTF grant for improved ADA access at Piers Gorge Unit
Bewabic	Project planning has intensified for APRA projects for sewer and road paving at Bewabic, and planning has begun for ADA improvements at Piers Gorge Unit of MRSRA.

Craig Lake	Through a partnership training, the road at Craig Lake State Park received improvements. 2 culverts were installed and almost 1/2 mile of identified areas were resurfaced with aggregate. This partnership will continue into the future and there will be more improvements coming.
Lake Gogebic	Design, planning, and study continue for Lake Gogebic State Park's ARPA project. Current project focus includes wastewater infrastructure exploration and sewage lagoon area soils study, as well as campground features and utility mapping.
Little Presque Isle	Trail improvement projects at Little Presque Isle State Forest are in the finishing stages of the bidding phase. Once the bids come back, construction could begin as early as this fall.
Van Riper	Design and planning meetings for the Michigan Iron Industry Museum are beginning to wrap up as selections have been made on facility improvements and are now working toward a construction timeline. These improvements will include roofing replacement, restroom design for ADA compliance to both men's and women's restrooms, and some parking area and entrance sidewalk modifications to allow for ADA compliance. There is also some design to address the roadway sluffing into the parking lot due to heavy rain, snowfall, and the slope of the hill. The Blueberry Ridge Pathway, Thunder Valley Equestrian Trail and the Schweitzer Basin Boating Access site were closed for a long weekend in August to make some much-needed roadway/parking improvements. Planning has started for some additional partnership training for summer 2024 within both Van Riper and Craig Lake State Parks.
District Wide	To assist with ARPA construction a DTMB construction management contract has been entered with Gundlach Champion. This will encumber the federal dollars and allow the department to nimbler in our construction management.

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

- **CO Peter Shambaugh** assisted Porcupine Mountain State Park rangers on a rescue of an individual who fell from a ledge while hiking. When the CO and rangers got on scene, the individual was able to walk and speak as he was helped back to the trailhead.
- **CO Jenni Hanson** discovered a large trash pile in the Ottawa National Forest. Amongst the litter, CO Hanson located two pill bottles, car insurance paperwork, and an auto parts store receipt, all with contact information on it. This case is still pending.
- **COs Phil Helminen and Jared Ferguson** were on marine patrol when they observed a man catch a fish and place it on his stringer attached to his boat. The COs contacted the man and asked him how his fishing day was going. He stated it was good as he caught a walleye that was right at the minimum size requirement. The man showed the COs his walleye on the stringer and when the COs measured the fish, it was well short of the minimum size requirement. The man stated he used a ruler in his boat to measure the fish, but his eyes must have read the ruler wrong. The fish was taken, and he was issued a citation for taking a short walleye.
- **COs Phil Helminen and Jared Ferguson** were on marine patrol when they observed a pontoon boat pulling a tube with three men on it and none of the three had on a PFD. The COs stopped the boat and the driver stated they must be getting stopped for not having life jackets on the tube. They stated they did not have any life jackets on the boat that were comfortable to wear while on the tube. A check of life jackets was conducted on the boat and COs found there was not enough life jackets on the boat for the people on board. The COs gave the boaters enough life jackets and followed them back to shore where citations were issued for no PFDs while being towed and towing without a PFD.
- **CO Phil Helminen** was on patrol when local dispatch put out a call of a single motorcycle crash with both people on the motorcycle injured. CO Helminen responded to the scene to assist Michigan State Police troopers. The passenger on the motorcycle was seriously injured and was transported a local hospital and then airlifted to a trauma center. The driver of the motorcycle had failed to negotiate a corner and went off of the roadway and overturned.

- **COs from the UP** volunteered at the DNR Pocket Park for the 2023 UP State Fair. COs answered a wide variety of recreation related questions. The COs were able to meet and greet members of the public. The COs handed out fishing guides, hunting digests, and free stickers to all the fairgoers who visited the Pocket Park. **THANK YOU!**
- **CO Jared Ferguson** participated in the law portion of Hunters Safety at the Sagola sportsmen club. There were 33 students in attendance.
- **COs Jackson Kelly and John Kamps** attended a kid's fishing derby on the Dead River Storage Basin. The CO's spoke with many of the kids and parents. Although the lake was wavy, many of the kids were able to catch fish.
- **COs Jackson Kelly and John Kamps** conducted an ORV patrol of the Silver Lake Basin area. The CO's contacted a number of ORV's and issued several warnings for basic ORV law violations.
- **CO Cody Smith** clocked into service when he heard local dispatch call for Baraga Sheriff Deputies Scroggs and Gustafson regarding a stranded vessel that had spent the night floating off Point Abbaye on Lake Superior's Keweenaw Bay. Hearing this, CO Smith responded to dispatch and met the deputies at the dock to start a long day on the water. CO Smith motored the patrol vessel to Point Abbaye where the stranded boaters were located, bobbing in the waves. A tow was established and slowly but surely, they were brought approximately 14 miles to their dock. The three individuals and their two dogs were happy to be back on dry land.
- **CO Cody Smith** was catching up on paperwork near a local stream when he observed an angler carrying a bucket to their vehicle. CO Smith checked the angler and discovered they were in possession of two undersized brown trout. Being one was still alive; it was returned to the water. Enforcement action was taken, and the angler was written a citation for possession of undersized trout.
- **CO Cody Smith** had recently clocked out of service when he received a call from Baraga County Deputies Scroggs and Gustafson regarding a stranded pontoon on Keweenaw Bay that was experiencing motor issues. CO Smith met the deputies at the dock where they navigated to the stranded vessel. After securing the vessel for tow, CO Smith brought the vessel to the L'Anse marina. The four boaters were able to trailer their vessel as they watched the sunset over Lake Superior.
- **CO Jenni Hanson** was notified of a log obstruction on Lake Gogebic. CO Hanson located the hazard, and with the help of CO Zach Painter, the two COs were able to drag the 20-plus foot log to shore.
- **CO Jenni Hanson** transported an injured hawk that was hit by a car. The hawk was brought to UP. Wildlife Rehabilitation- Keweenaw Group where it was cared for and received proper treatment. The hawk successfully passed its flying test and will be released back to the wild soon.
- **COs Zach Painter, Phil Helminen and Peter Shambaugh** conducted a marine patrol on the Cisco Chain of Lakes in Gogebic County. The COs issued five citations for fishing without a license and one citation for failure to provide PFD.
- **COs Phil Helminen, Pete Shambaugh, and Zach Painter** were on marine patrol when they observed four people fishing on a boat. As the COs approached the boat, one person pulled up their fishing line and set the pole down. The COs contacted them and the person who set the pole down stated they were not fishing and just out for a boat ride. CO Helminen held up binoculars and said they had watched her fishing and she stated that it was her last day in town on vacation and decided to fish. A check of her fishing license showed she did not have one since 2012. Another person on the boat stated that they did not have a fishing license either. Both were cited for not having a fishing license.
- **COs Phil Helminen, Pete Shambaugh, and Zach Painter** were on marine patrol when they observed four people fishing on a boat. The COs contacted the anglers, and one man provided an expired daily fishing license from several days prior and another man stated that he did not buy a license. A check of their fishing license history showed that neither had a valid fishing license. Both were cited for fishing without a license.
- **CO Steve Sajtar** observed an ORV operating down the center of US 41 in Menominee County. CO Sajtar also noticed that the ORV was operating without an ORV license. Activating his emergency lights, CO Sajtar stopped the ORV and contacted the operator. The operator stated that he had just bought the machine. After a quick investigation, CO Sajtar determined that the suspect had purchased the ORV a month prior. CO Sajtar issued a citation for failure to license the ORV and a verbal warning for operating the ORV on a public highway.
- **COs Steve Sajtar, John Kamps, and Cody Smith** attended the 2023 National Trappers Association Convention in Escanaba. The COs were able to meet many community members and answer various questions related to trapping. Trappers from North America and beyond attended the 2023 convention.

- **CO Jeremy Sergey** assisted the Marquette Police Department with their Hunter Safety Class. CO Sergey covered the law section and described the duties of a Conservation Officer.
- **CO Jeremy Sergey** conducted an interview with TV6 News. The interview described the new law adding COs to the definition of law enforcement being able to intervene in instances where a person's mental health is putting them in danger. The COs will be able to put a subject in protective custody if they are a danger to themselves or members of the public. The subject will then be taken to a health professional for proper treatment.
- **COs Jeremy Sergey and John Kamps** were on marine patrol when they observed multiple people fishing on a pontoon boat. As the COs approach the boat, two of the individuals reeled in their fishing poles. Even though one of the individuals claimed he wasn't fishing, the COs advised him they had been watching him fish for several minutes. Two citations were issued for fishing without a license.
- **CO Jeremy Sergey** participated in the annual boat parade in Marquette's Lower Harbor following a Veteran's fishing tournament in Marquette. The Veterans are honored by numerous spectators lining the break-wall in the harbor and waving to the proud veteran anglers.

Wildlife Division: Dave Lemmien, UP Wildlife Supervisor

Projects and Outreach

- The bridge replacement over the Arnhiem Ditch in the Sturgeon Rover Sloughs will be completed this September.
- Goose and early teal start September 1, the Sturgeon River Sloughs is looking good for habitat and bird numbers, we should have the farmed field flooded for the waterfowl opener on Sept. 30 (waiting for a replanted crop to mature).
- Staff conducted goose banding and worked together with partners to band 93 geese in the far eastern UP, with the 213 birds banded on the west side, staff met our UPR quota with 306 birds total!
- Research team collared a male bear on Drummond Island (first in the past ~30 years) and set out cameras as an alternative for Drummond bear abundance survey.
- WLD staff completed their annual bear bait index survey to monitor species presence/abundance across Drummond Island.
- Three Shores CISMA, Soo Tribe and TNC partners conducted European Frog bit removals, and invasive species treatments across the Maxton Plains (high quality alvar glade community) where very rare plant species are present.
- Duck banding will be occurring into August with a regional goal to band 100 mallards and 100 wood ducks.
- Staff are busy checking and maintaining wildlife floodings, GEMS, and other wildlife areas.

Nuisance Wildlife Complaints

- Nuisance complaints have been very active as tourism peaks and available food sources from the public increase. We hope that complaints begin to slow as woodland food sources become readily available.
- Bear calls are one of the top nuisance wildlife complaints received this time of year. To avoid bear problems, we encourage people to take down bird feeders, remove or secure any other items that could attract bear including garbage and pet foods, and keep grills clean and unavailable. Encourage neighbors to do the same!

State Forest Management

- Wildlife staff are conducting forest inventory in the field during spring and summer months in concert with the foresters. Watch for open house opportunities to become familiar with forest treatments later this summer and fall.
- Land transactions, state forest boundary reviews, and other land use reviews are ongoing in all units.
- These plans can be viewed, and comments can be made in the interactive MI State Forest Map through the DNR's web site: <https://midnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=43579d040c7d4860b125e405f531d465>

Habitat Management

- Continued opening maintenance is occurring throughout the region, herbaceous plantings within openings, GEMS and deer wintering complexes are completed throughout July-Aug and typically include clover and rye to benefit the annual needs of deer and upland game birds.
- Hunter walking trail improvements continue prior to small game opener Sept 15.

Forest Resources Division: Tom Seablom, Western UP District Supervisor

- Field work on the 2025 YOE Inventory has been completed. The last Open House for the WUP will be the Gwinn Unit on September 19th. Open House comment periods will remain for people that are unable to meet in person. For the Gwinn Unit this started August 20th, ending on September 20th. Open house Comment Periods and Compartment Review schedules for other units are posted online along with other state forest inventory information at: Michigan.Gov/forestInput.
- As of August 25th, 300 timber sale contracts are open WUP Wide. This represents 915,361 cords of timber on 49,433 acres, valued at approximately \$35.2 million. Included in this are 21 GNA sales representing 84,315 cords of timber on 4,310 acres, valued at approximately \$2.7 million. As of August 25th, 15 sales are available WUP Wide for the minimum advertised price. This represents 26,726 Cords. Find more information on State Forest timber sales at: Michigan.Gov/Timber
- WUP Units are reporting 29 Active Timber Sales in the WUP totaling about 2,417 acres. Units report low demand for all product categories. Producers with mill contracts are the only ones able to move wood. Little to no open market wood is being taken.
- Mike Brodeur is currently working in an out of class assignment as the acting Gwinn Unit Manager. Working Out of Class (WOC) assignments are short term opportunities that give an employee to take on added responsibility in a role they may want to promote into. Mike has been with FRD as a forester in Baraga working in the GNA program since 2016. Mike has a very strong work ethic, is highly motivated, and has been a leader in the WUP GNA program since its inception. Mike began his WOC assignment on August 6 and will serve in that position until the end of October.
- The forest utilization and marketing program staff along with the forest stewardship program staff will be attending the Great Lakes Logging and Heavy Equipment Expo in Escanaba September 7-9. Michigan DNR has a table in the main indoor exhibit space and uses the opportunity to connect with loggers, truck drivers, and mill owners.
- Commercial Forest staff is working on finishing up new enrollment inspections and getting ready for the CF Hearings which will be by Zoom Meetings. For more information on the Commercial Forest Program go to Michigan.Gov/Commercialforest
- The UP responded to a total of 7 reportable fires for a total of 41.1 acres during the months of July and August. No prescribed burning took place over the last few months. Scattered rainfall amounts and air quality restrictions were factors that contributed to the delay. Rain has helped to keep fire to a minimum the past two months The UP is headed into the fall season in good shape. If rain events continue to trend in a pattern that allows for weekly rainfall amounts, fire occurrence should remain low.
- Since the beginning of July there were 8 UP firefighters dispatched to various locations including Canada (Hand crew Members), Montana (Engine Detail), Texas (Tractor Detail), and Overhead positions with Incident Management Teams.

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

Trail Specialist: Jeff Kakuk, Western Upper Peninsula

Snowmobile Trails

- 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 project is managed by DNR Wildlife Division. **UPDATE:** The bridge is completed and ready for the 23/24 snowmobile season.

- UP15 has been closed between Trail UP2 and Trail UP111 in Iron County as a bridge inspection has deemed the bridge unsafe. A viable re-route of the trail has been taking shape and hopes for having the trail segment reopen for the 2023/2024 season remain high. **UPDATE:** No new updates from sponsor.
- UP13 trail loop north of Twin Lakes has closed due to a large trail bridge washing out early this spring. **UPDATE:** The bridge has been removed and site stabilized at Sleeping River crossing. The north loop of snowmobile trail #UP13 from Twin Lakes to Greenland will be closed for the 23/24 snowmobile season.
- Snowmobile trail infrastructure is a major concern for the continued viability of the WUP trail system. The continued failure and closure of trails is very likely without an improved inspection system.

Multi-Use Trails

- Trail infrastructure failure continues to occur and impact many of the trail systems within the WUP. Spring melt impacted nearly two dozen sites this year and that trend should be expected due to age and condition of the system.
- Sidnaw to Bergland (UP8 SNOW/SB ORV Trail) trail has closed again east of Kenton as two site adjacent to last years culvert repair have failed. Trail Specialist has recommended a nearly 4 mile trail segment re-build based on documentation of the existing infrastructure. **UPDATE:** Trail segment remains closed and DNR is reviewing options for the winter.
- The Bill Nicholls Rail Trail (UP3) temporary repairs have kept the trail open between Painsdale and South Range. The department is continuing with a larger scope engineering project to review nearly 2 miles of trail that has the potential to further impact both trail connectivity and the Adams Township Water Supply. A FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant was submitted to aid in the costly infrastructure construction costs. **UPDATE:** The project design is substantially complete. DNR is working on obtaining construction easements and continued coordination with Adams Township water utility. There have been no updates from FEMA as it pertains to the Hazard Mitigation Grant application.
- The Stager to Crystal Rail Trail (UP113) just south of Crystal Falls was closed in May 2022 due to a large washout. The trail repair has been designed, bid and awarded to FA Industrial from Iron River, MI. Project will be completed this summer. The City of Crystal Falls has developed an alternate route for the trail connection. **UPDATE:** Trail repairs have been completed and segment will re-open for the 23/24 snowmobile season.
- Four large culverts on rail grades in the WUP trail system have been funded for construction and awarded to Ruotsala Contracting. It is hoped that one of these can be yet installed this fall. The remaining will be completed in 2024.