Natural Resources Commission Meeting

Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

May 10, 2018

Proposed Orders

• For Information - NRC
  – Furbearer Regulations (WCO # 7 of 2018)
  – Squirrel Season Dates (WCO # 8 of 2018)
  – Open/Closed Deer Management Units (WCO # 9 of 2018)
  – Falconry Season Dates for the Take of Certain Migratory Birds Technical Amendment (WCO # 10 of 2018)

• For Action – NRC
  – Deer Management Assistance Permit Regulations (WCO # 6 of 2018)
NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

• Fisheries Chief Update
  – Arctic Grayling Update
  – Michigan Fishing Tournament
• Wildlife Chief Update
  – Squirrel Season Dates
  – Furbearer Regulations
  – Open/Closed Deer Management Units

Department of Natural Resources

Fisheries Division
Chief’s Update
Jim Dexter
May 10, 2018
Egg-Take Update

• Egg collections delayed by late spring
• May 3rd Bay de Noc walleye egg take latest ever

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Egg Take Location</th>
<th>Eggs Collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steelhead</td>
<td>Little Manistee River Weir</td>
<td>4.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walleye</td>
<td>Muskegon River</td>
<td>45.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walleye</td>
<td>Bay de Noc</td>
<td>16.8 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2018 Stocking Update

• On target to meet all requests
• Delayed spring has us 1-2 weeks behind
Brown Trout Strains

- Gilchrist Creek and Sturgeon River fill similar niche
- Discontinuing Gilchrist Creek strain
- Will result in improved brood health for remaining stocks

Thank you!
Arctic Grayling Initiative

• Foundational partnership: MDNR and LRBOI
• First meeting August 2016
• 40+ organizations
• Feds, Universities, NGOs, Tribes, Corporations…
Arctic Grayling Initiative
Mission Statement

To establish self-sustaining population(s) of Arctic grayling within the species historic range in Michigan.

Why now?

- Montana success
- Remote Site Incubators (RSIs)
- 7 years natural reproduction in Ruby R
- Co-occurring brown trout and brook trout
Focus Areas
Core Teams

- Fish Production
- Research
- Management
- Outreach and Education*

*www.migrayling.org

General Timeline

2017-19: Identify streams for RSIs and experiments

2019-21: Broodstock devp, Eggs from AK

2021- ?: RSIs, Michigan broodstock as egg source
2017 Upper Manistee Tributary Investigations

1. Manistee River (County Hwy 38 crossing)
2. Unnamed Tributary (Cameron Bridge Road)
3. Goose Creek
4. Portage Creek
5. Pickerel Lake Outlet
6. Willow Creek
7. Maple Creek
8. Big Cannon Creek ("Archie's spot")
9. Big Devil Creek
10. Unnamed Tributary (CCC Bridge)
11. Big Cannon Creek (Naples Road crossing)
12. Filer Creek (Kalkaska County)
13. Little Cannon Creek
14. Walton Lake Outlet
15. Manton Creek (Near confluence)
16. West Branch Anderson Creek (Habitat only)
17. Wheeler Creek
18. Adams Creek
19. Filer Creek (Wexford County)
20. Buttermilk Creek
21. Chase Creek
22. Hopkins Creek

Fundraising

- Goal: $1.1 million

- To date:
  - $117,000 Consumers Energy Foundation
  - $180,000 Wenger Foundation
  - $10,000 Rotary Charities of T.C.
  - $25,000 (pledged) from LRBOI for UV
  - $25,000 (pledged) from DNR for UV
  - $11,000 Petoskey Community Foundation
Challenges

• U/V at Oden SFH: $275,000
• Understanding RSIs in MI streams
• Competition with MI complex of fishes
• Alaska (Chena River) as egg source

Thank you
Michigan’s Fishing Tournament Information System

Fisheries Division
Jim Dexter
May 10, 2018

Fish Order 215.15A

• Bass fishing tournament requirements:
  – Online registration
  – Online reporting
Fishing Tournament Information System

• Significant investment
  – $182,000 spent
• Launched April 2016

2016 & 2017Registrations

• 2016
  – 2,096 tournaments
    • 243 directors
    • 270 waterbodies

• 2017
  – 2,277 tournaments
    • 275 directors
    • 272 waterbodies

• 2018
  – 1,899 tournaments
    (as of 04/30/18)
### 2016 & 2017 Results: Statewide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2-109 boats</td>
<td>13.7 boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-216 anglers</td>
<td>25.7 anglers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>0-123 boats</td>
<td>13.7 boats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-213 anglers</td>
<td>25.4 anglers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, 88% Reporting Compliance – this is very good!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fish/tournament</th>
<th>Fish Weighed</th>
<th>Average Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>~39.6</td>
<td>83,000</td>
<td>2.2 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>~40.8</td>
<td>92,000</td>
<td>2.24 lbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extremely consistent across years
2016 & 2017 Results: Statewide

“Big Bass” Reported in 2016
1. 7.60 lbs Cheboygan R. (Cheboygan)
2. 6.95 lbs Lake St. Clair (Macomb)

Average Big Bass Weight = 3.91 lbs

“Big Bass” Reported in 2017
1. 8.00 lbs Sand Lake (Lenawee)
2. 7.96 lbs Halfmoon Lake (Washtenaw)

Average Big Bass Weight = 3.88 lbs

Program Expansion Proposal

Walleye, Muskellunge & Bow
Outreach Efforts

• Collaboration with tournament directors
• Press releases
• Promotional video online
• Annual reports
  – Hard copies
  – Online PDF
  – Email

Thank You
Questions?
Wildlife Chief Update

Russ Mason

Wildlife Chief Update

• Success of the current strategy to market the Pure Michigan Hunt
• Update on Turkey Season
• Update on deer in the Upper Peninsula
• Eastern Elk Management Workshop
**Falconry Season Dates**

- Technical Change
  - Exceeded the allowable number of days of hunting ducks
    - Only 29 days for falconry dates, not 35 days like 2017-18 dates – net loss of 6 days because of additional days for teal season
  - Adjustment to the 2018-19 additional falconry dates to December 31 to January 12, 2019 and February 23 to March 10, 2019
  - Provides technical correction to align the Wildlife Conservation Order with Federal frameworks
  - Communicated to Michigan Hawking Club

**Squirrel Season Dates**

- Extend squirrel season to March 31
  - Current season is September 15 to March 1
- Align with current rabbit season
- Provide additional recreational opportunities for squirrel hunters
- Harvest will be low; statewide population impacts will be negligible
- Requested by MI Hunting Dog Federation
Thank You

Furbearer Recommendations
Adam Bump, Furbearer Specialist
May 10, 2018
Furbearer Regulations

- Two year cycle
  - Provides regulation stability/time to review
- Running list of issues
  - External and internal
  - Used to drive regulations process
- 2018 issues were selected in fall of 2016
- 2020 cycle begins now

2018 Selected Issues

- All bobcat issues that were on the list
  - Season structure
  - Bag limit
  - At night, from treestand, “snaring”
- All marten/fisher issues that were on the list
  - Bag limit
  - Fisher hunting season, Drummond Island season
Bobcats

• Hunting at night / Hunting from a treestand
  – Recommend no change
    • Concerns from stakeholders regarding the population

• “Snaring” of Bobcats
  – Recommend no change
    • Concerns from stakeholders regarding the population
    • Cable restraint regulations are controversial

Bobcats

• Bobcat bag limit
  – Recommend a reduction to a one bobcat limit, statewide
    • UP population index suggests a cycle may occur
      – Currently on a downswing
      – Unclear if it’s a significant decline
    • Low impact on recreational opportunities
    • Few animals taken on second license
    • Stakeholder input mixed, generally hound groups support 1 bobcat, trapping groups do not
Use of 2nd Bobcat Kill Tag

- Average number of people that registered 2 bobcats a season
  - 10 year: 79 (2007-2016)
  - 5 year: 58 (2012-2016)
- ~20% of overall 2016 UP harvest
  - Remains fairly consistent over time
  - About 58% are trapped
  - 22% hunted
  - 19% split

Bobcats

- UP Bobcat trapping season structure
  - Recommend no change
  - Several issues were lumped together- a desire to have an earlier season trapping opportunity
  - Lack of desire to see increase in harvest
    - From staff and some stakeholders
    - Difficult to provide early opportunity without increasing harvest or having very complex regulations
Fisher and Marten

• Fisher hunting season / fisher season on Drummond Island
  – Recommend no change
  – Have concerns about fisher populations, do not want to increase harvest or introduce new harvest methods/locations at this time

Fisher and Marten

• Bag Limits
  – Recommend increasing marten bag limit but with season length reduction
    • Fisher population concerns
    • Desire to be cautious with marten populations
    • Attempt to provide some of the opportunity requested by trappers
    • Discussed options with Furtaker User Group
      – Preferred option but season length reduction not favored
**Recommendation Details**

- Retain 1 marten OR 1 fisher tag
- Add a marten only tag
- Bag limit: up to 2 marten, only 1 fisher
- Shorten season to compensate for harvest increase and likely incidental fisher increase
  - 9 days (current season is 15 days)
  - Start on the 1st Friday in December
    - 1 full weekend, season ends on a Saturday

**Why a Conservative Approach?**

- Fisher population concerns
- Most UP staff desire caution with marten
- Illegal take
- What if pelt prices increase?
- Tribal take
- Still allow recreation but remain conservative
- Need to look at big picture (data) balanced with individual experiences
Figure 2. Estimated mean number of days required to harvest a marten in Michigan during 2000-2015. Vertical bars represent the 95% confidence interval. Estimates of effort/registered marten included only trappers targeting martens.

Marten Population Abundance: SCAA Model

Estimated Abundance

Year

0 500 1000 1500 2000 2500

Registered U.P. Martens 2000-2016

Registered U.P. Martens, Average Pelt Value (MN and WI), 2000-2015
Fisher Population: Harvest Effort Index

Figure 5. Estimated mean number of days required to harvest a fisher in Michigan during 1997-2015. Vertical bars represent the 95% confidence interval. Estimates of effort/registered fisher included only trappers targetingfishers.

Fisher Population Abundance: SCAA Model
Exposed Bait

- Recommend restrictions to use of foothold traps near exposed bait
  - Reduce chances of incidental capture of raptors
  - Trapping organizations supportive
  - Proposed regulation would address issue while minimizing impact to trapping activity
    - No foothold traps within 20 feet of bait visible from 4 feet or more above the bait
    - Some exceptions for visual attractants
    - Doesn’t include submerged sets

Moving Forward: 2020 Cycle

- Begin reviewing running list, selection of issue late summer-early fall
- Cycle will be moved up to accommodate furbearer seasons
- Input on priority or non-priority issues
Stakeholder Priority Issues

- Otter bag limits
- Mink snaring
- Keep incidental mink in colony traps
- Eliminate hunter orange requirement for predator hunting with dogs
- Eliminate “quiet period”
- Beaver/otter season
- Trapping in muskrat “push ups”

THE LIST

- Mink snaring
- Riparian rights - Ability to anchor a floating set on private bottomlands
- 48hr check - Possible for LP
- Increase otter bag limits statewide
- Beaver/otter season - spring
- Bobcat harvest - extend south
- Cable restraints
- Allow nighttime bobcat hunting
THE LIST

• Use incidental pelts for educational purpose and put up fur to raise money for educational purposes
• Flybait (*Illegal use to poison raccoons*)
  – MDARD attempt to restrict in 2016 unsuccessful
• Quota system for limited take species
• Have state land available for dog events / use state land for competition hunts

THE LIST

• Limit purchase of licenses to Dec. 1st
• Include trapping if there is a harvest on wolves
• Dog training facilities
• Expand beaver season in LP to April 30
• Consider having spring beaver season in southern Michigan
• Regulating guiding pressure (after guiding defined)
• Way track of # of dogs caught in traps
THE LIST

• Provide CITES and survey ahead of time and mail in data. Turn in skulls at convenient time
• Require signage in areas traps are being used
• Require reporting of “non-target” animals caught in traps (closed season, T&E, pets)
• Require 24 hour check statewide
• Remove hunters orange requirement for predator hunting with dogs
• Expand bobcat season length in LP (and UP) and bag limits

THE LIST

• Fisher/marten bag limit and season length (more of each)
• Otter bag limits – do all state at once
• Damage control permit- allow the ability to keep animals caught
• Eliminate dog training restriction in spring (allow year round dog training on all lands)
• Fisher hunting season (including use of dogs)
• Foot snares for bear (Maine regulations)
THE LIST

• Trapping inside muskrat push ups (allow)
• Allow use of elevated platforms for nighttime predator hunting like it is during the day
• Allow 10 round mags
• Open state land in limited firearm zone to nighttime centerfire hunting
• Keep incidental mink caught in colony traps
• Bobcat trapping season in the NLP - change season dates (align for 2 weekends)

Thank you!

www.michigan.gov
Open/Closed Deer Management Units

Sarah Cummins
Acting Wildlife Policy and Management Section Supervisor
May 10, 2018

Open/Closed DMUs

• No changes to open/closed areas other than splitting them out at the county level; no change in status
• Administrative change to define DMUs that will be open or closed for the 2018 deer hunting season
• Eliminate multi-county DMUs where CWD has been identified and revert to individual county DMUs
  – Allows flexibility for the NRC to consider CWD regulations for public and private lands within individual county DMUs
  – Creates a stable, yet adaptable DMU framework for regulations as CWD management strategies change over time
Open/Closed DMUs

• Eliminating DMU 333 and DMU 419 and reverting to individual county DMUs:
  – Clinton County – DMU 019
  – Eaton County – DMU 023
  – Ingham County – DMU 033
  – Ionia County – DMU 034
  – Shiawassee County – DMU 078

Open/Closed DMUs

• Eliminating DMU 354 and DMU 359 and reverting to individual county DMUs:
  – Mecosta County – DMU 054
  – Montcalm County – DMU 059

• Eliminating DMU 341 and reverting to individual county DMUs:
  – Kent County – DMU 041
  – Muskegon County – DMU 061
  – Ottawa County – DMU 070
Open/Closed DMUs

• Eliminating DMU 361 and reverting to individual county DMUs:
  – Muskegon County – DMU 061
  – Newaygo County – DMU 062
  – Oceana County – DMU 064

Open/Closed DMUs

• Open DMUs located outside of these areas will continue to be available by lottery and must be identified by June
  – Ensures effective communications and customer service during the antlerless application, drawing, and purchasing process
  – Allows hunters and retail agents to know what DMUs will have antlerless licenses available
  – Allows time for hunters to prepare for their hunt
  – Allows retail agents to sell applications immediately upon the antlerless application period
Thank You