Spring Highlights

Southwest *Region*

2016

Wildlife Division

Working with the community

GPS Goal 5

Students from Kalamazoo Christian High School had the opportunity to work with local staff at the Gourdneck State Game Area to help clear a beaver dam and also build a beaver pond leveler. The beaver pond leveler was constructed by the students and placed in the impoundment to create better drainage. The students had a great time learning how to manage a body of water and the wildlife that inhabits the area!

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Oak restoration workshop

GPS Goal 2

On May 17 & 18, an Oak Restoration Workshop was held at the Barry State Game Area and Yankee Springs Recreation Area. Attendees ranged from local DNR staff to silviculturists from Pennsylvania! This workshop had four main objectives:

1. Recognize current challenges and impediments to oak regeneration/restoration
2. Identify promising silvicultural treatments that favor oak
3. Highlight sources of information that supports oak ecosystem restoration, and
4. Discuss the significance of oak regeneration monitoring and approaches to accomplish monitoring.

Overall, this workshop was a great success!

Youth turkey hunt

GPS Goal 5

On April 23, 10 youth hunters ventured over to the Muskegon State Game Area for the annual youth turkey hunt! Four of the youth hunters were successful in harvesting birds. Three jakes and one large tom, 24lbs, 10 inch beard and 1 1/2 inch spurs were taken. Laughter and memories were created that will last a lifetime!

2016

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Peregrine banding

GPS Goal 1

West Michigan's 2016 peregrine chick banding season has finally wrapped up for this year. The four banding sites included: 5/3 Bank in Kalamazoo, Kent County Courthouse in Grand Rapids, Consumers Energy, J.H. Campbell Plant in Port Sheldon, and Board of Light and Power Sims Plant in Grand Haven. "In total, 15 peregrine chicks, 8 females and 7 males were banded," said Nik Kalejs, Wildlife Biologist, "It was a very good banding season."

Improving wetlands at Flat River SGA

GPS Goal 2

Staff at the Flat River State Game Area have been working hard to improve the wetlands around the game area. Crews are currently replacing the boards on a dam to make it more structurally sound, helping to prevent future dam failures. The drawdown will stimulate emergent vegetation creating ideal habitat for wood duck, teal and many other wildlife. Be sure to go explore the Flat River State Game Area and check out these amazing wetlands!

Meet the Southwest Region

GPS Goal 5

Wildlife Biologist **Mark Mills** started with the Wildlife Division in 2008 as a Wildlife Technician at the Allegan State Game Area. He covers Allegan, Kalamazoo & Van Buren Counties and oversees the Allegan, Gourdneck, Fulton, Keeler, Fuller Woods and Cornish State Game Areas. Mark has been married to his wife Melanie for 15 years. They have 3 children (2 boys, 1 girl) with another baby girl on the way! Mark likes to fish, hunt and spend time with his family. He also enjoys traveling to Wyoming to visit his twin brother and his family.

Wildlife Technician **Maria Albright** transferred to Wildlife Division in 1989 and is now at the Allegan State Game Area. Maria enjoys traveling, gardening and spending time hunting and foraging on the SGA in her spare time. At work, Maria turns the future goals for SGA habitat established by Mark Mills into annual work plans by coordinating the needs of many employees, contractors, and volunteers that work hard to keep the Game Area such a great place! Maria is married to Farm Unit Wildlife Assistant Jeff Janose.

To contact Southwest Region staff, call one of the Customer Service Centers

Plainwell (269) 685-6851 ▪ Lansing CSC (517) 284-4720

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