



Ohio Division of Wildlife

Spring 2021 Update

Statewide Updates: Kevin Behr Making Progress

- As many of you know, D5 Wildlife Investigator Kevin Behr was shot while investigating a poaching incident on December 20. Officer Behr has undergone several surgeries and is progressing at a steady rate.
- On January 28, he was transferred to a rehabilitation facility. **Over 100 people including wildlife officers and police officers, lit up the night in support of Officer Behr as he began his journey in rehab.**
- The amount of love and support for the Behr family has been outstanding. The rehab nurses said they have never seen someone receive so many cards! Wildlife Law Administrator Ken Fitz started a **challenge coin collection for Officer Behr—over 70 agencies have contributed!**
- The Behr family thanks you for your continuous thoughts, prayers, and support. It is truly heart-warming and inspiring to see a community come together from far and wide. **Please continue to keep Officer Behr and his family in your thoughts and prayers through rehab and his journey home.**
- Cards can be sent to the District 5 Office: 1076 Old Springfield Pike, Xenia, Ohio 45385.



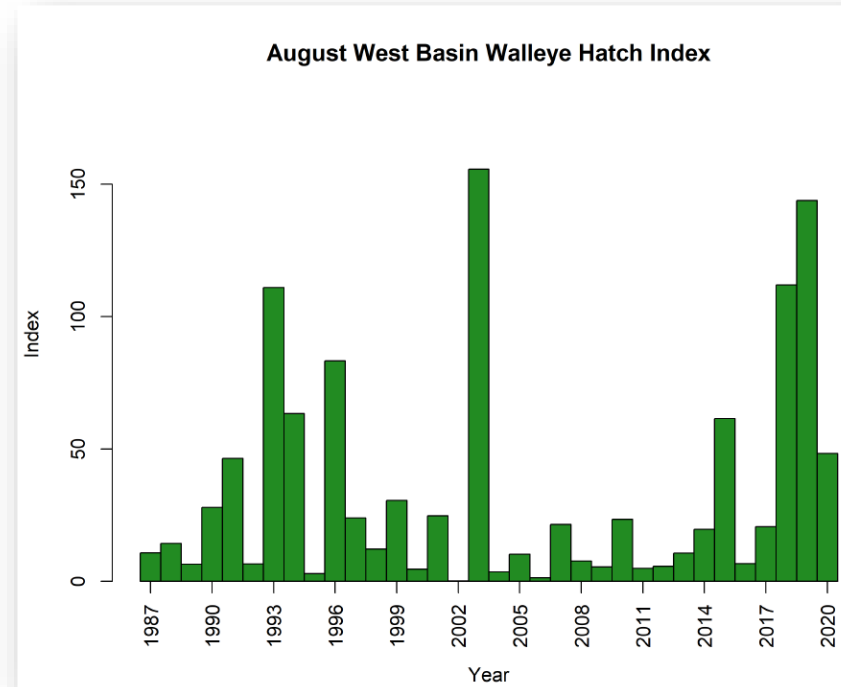
Statewide Updates: 2021-2022 Fishing Regs

- The 2021-2022 Fishing Regulations are out! Changes to this year's regulations are as follows:
 - Special regulations for walleye, sauger, and saugeye in the Sandusky River and Sandusky Bay have been removed.
 - Statewide channel catfish regulations at lakes less than 700 acres have been removed.
 - The Lake Erie Charter Fishing License is no longer available. A one-day license is valid to fish all public waters, including Lake Erie.
- Online copies are available to download [here](#). You can also view the fishing regulations on the [HuntFish OH mobile app](#). This allows you to view a digital copy at any time, with or without service.
- Please note that the **hard copy** of the 2021-22 Fishing Regulations booklet **incorrectly states on page 7 that there is a daily limit of 30 for striped, hybrid, and white bass while fishing in the Lake Erie Fishing District**. The online version has been corrected to reflect that there is no limit for striped, hybrid, and white bass while fishing in the Lake Erie Fishing District.
- A Spanish version of the regulations will also be available soon!



Statewide Updates: Lake Erie Walleye Boom

- The Lake Erie walleye boom continues! Sampling for young-of-year walleye in 2020 showed another above average year class.
- The Ohio August west basin trawl survey index in 2020 was the 8th best in the 34-year sampling window. This is well above average. Add those fish to the big hatches in 2015, 2018, and 2019, and the future of walleye fishing in Lake Erie seems secure for a long time.
- Last year's estimates show that there are over 150 million adult walleye in Lake Erie—the most walleye ever present! Harvest rates are the highest they have ever been.
- For more information about fishing Lake Erie, visit our website [here](#).



Statewide Updates: Deer Season Summary

Deer hunters had great success! Overall harvest was up compared to the average of the past 3 years.

- 94,691 harvested by archery hunters
- 86,853 harvested during weeklong and 2-day gun seasons
- 9,708 harvested during muzzleloader season
- 5,795 harvested during youth gun season
- **Deer harvest total: 197,735** (3-year average 180,921)

For a more detailed deer harvest summary including county breakdowns and percentage breakdowns, visit the [Deer Hunting Season Conclusion news release](#).



Statewide Updates: Don't Forget to Renew Your License!

- Annual hunting licenses expired last month, so be sure to renew yours! Licenses can be renewed [online](#) or conveniently through our [HuntFish OH mobile app](#). The mobile app allows you to always have access to your licenses and permits.
- Annual fishing licenses expire one year from the date of purchase. Be sure to check yours to see if it is still valid.
- 3, 5, and 10-year hunting and fishing licenses are available as well as a lifetime license. Lifetime license are valid even if you move out of state—this means you would not have to buy a non-resident license even if you move out of Ohio! These are great deals!
- An annual range permit and annual hunting license combo is also available for \$29.12. This gets you access to all ODNR ranges, including our new Delaware and Spring Valley ranges!



Statewide Updates: Hunter Education

Spring turkey season will be here soon!



hunter-ed.com/ohio/

- Online Hunter Education is for Ohio residents 12 years of age or older. Those under 12 can purchase and use the apprentice license until in-person courses are available again.
- This version of hunter education allows students to complete the entire course online. The online course will take approximately 8 hours to complete, but you may stop and pick up where you left off. There are quizzes at the end of each unit that you must pass to proceed to the next unit. Students must pass a final exam to receive certification. There is a fee paid to the online vendor at the time of registration prior to starting the course.

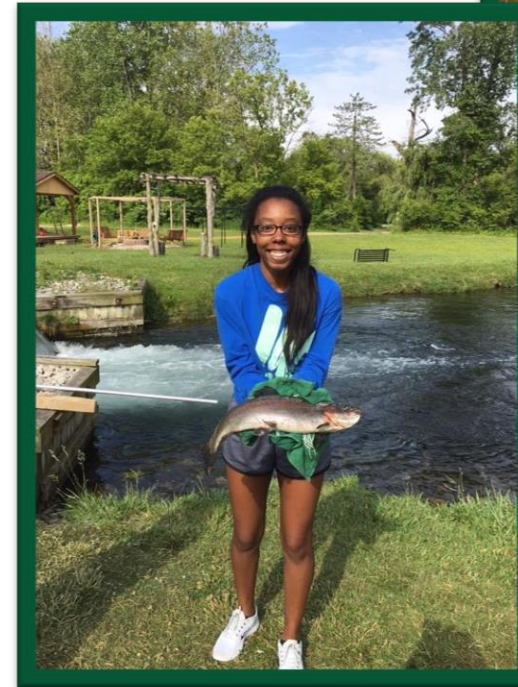
Statewide Updates: Turkey Season is Coming!

- Spring Wild Turkey Season is fast approaching! *Note that both zones open on a Saturday rather than Monday.* Season dates are as follows:
 - Youth: April 17 to April 18
 - South Zone: April 24 to May 23
 - Northeast Zone: May 1 to May 30
- Regulations have not changed for the 2021 season. Regulations can be viewed [online](#) or on the [HuntFish OH mobile app](#). On the app, you can view a digital copy of the regulations at any time, with or without service.



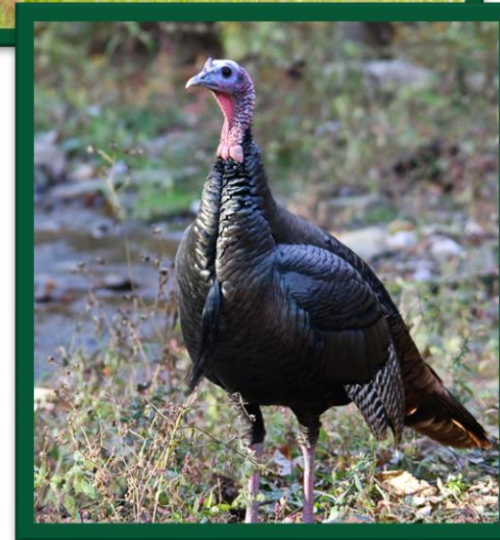
Statewide Updates: Controlled Access Lotteries

- The online application period for controlled fishing and turkey hunting is open now until March 31. Controlled access permits are available for the following areas:
 - Castalia Fish Hatchery (trout- adult and youth)
 - Killdeer Plains WA (mentor turkey)
 - Eagle Creek WA (mentor turkey)
 - Lake La Su An WA (youth turkey)
 - Killbuck Marsh WA (youth turkey)
 - Mosquito Creek WA (youth turkey)
- There will be a \$3 fee for each application. All turkey hunt applicants must hold a valid hunting license and turkey permit to apply. A fishing license is not required to enter the Castalia lottery. To apply, click [here](#).
- For more information about controlled hunting and fishing opportunities [visit our website](#).



Statewide Updates: Hunting Season Proposals

- The Ohio Wildlife Council received deer and turkey hunting proposals for the 2021-2022 season. To view the full news release and proposed season dates, click [here](#).
- A statewide hearing on all proposed rules will be held virtually on Wednesday, March 18, 2021 at 9 a.m. You have the opportunity submit your comments on the proposals. To submit your comments, click [here](#).
- **Deer Proposals**
 - One antlerless deer can be taken from all public hunting areas from Sept. 25, 2021 to Feb. 6, 2022.
 - Deer management permits can be used in all 88 Ohio counties from Sept. 25 to Nov. 28, 2021 for antlerless deer harvested on private land, Lake La Su An Wildlife Area, and Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area up to the county bag limit.
- **Turkey Proposals**
 - One bearded wild turkey may be taken during the spring season on public land.

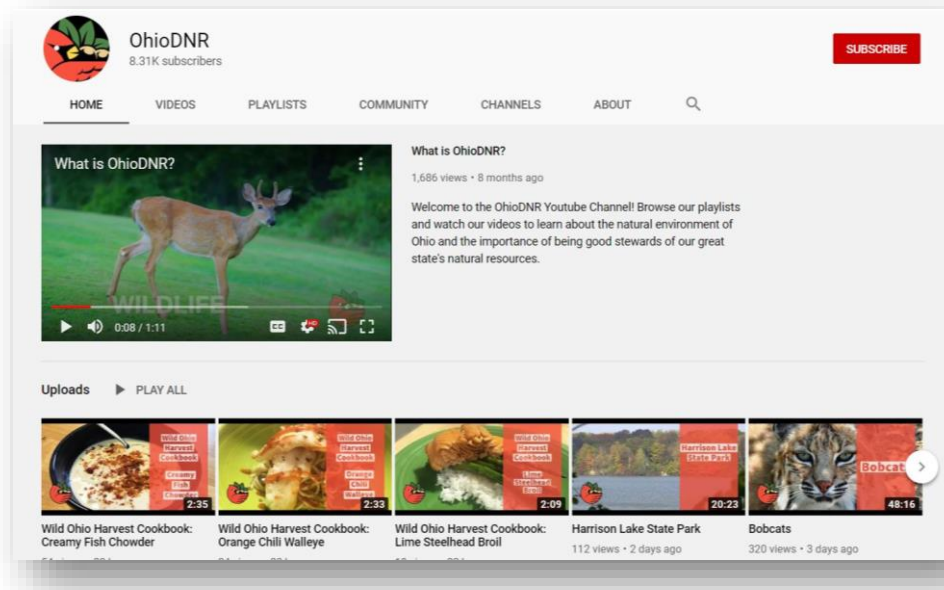


Statewide Updates: River Otter Survey Results

- Every year, Division of Wildlife personnel conduct river otter surveys at bridge sites. Signs that show river otter activity are tracks, slides, latrines, and fish scales.
- Bridge surveys are combined with harvest reports, incidentally trapped animals, conflict reports, results from the division's annual bowhunter observation survey, and sightings reported by members of the public through the division's wildlife species sighting website. This research helps to assess the current distribution and long-term population trends of river otters.
- The latest river otter report can be viewed on our website [here](#).
- **Report your river otter (and other wildlife) sightings!** Your input helps us to accurately measure current wildlife populations. Other species we are especially interested in are black bear, bobcat, feral swine, gray fox, and more. For more information and to report your wildlife sightings, click [here](#).



Statewide Updates: New Videos



[Ohio DNR YouTube Link](#)

- Check out the ODNR YouTube page! We have hundreds of videos on all kinds of topics. From virtual hikes to fishing basic, there is something for everyone!
- Be sure to check out our newest series- [Wild Ohio Harvest Cookbook](#). Our demonstrational videos will show you our favorite ways to cook up wild game. For printed recipes, visit our online cookbook [here](#). New recipes are added monthly!

Statewide Updates: Wild Ohio Magazine

- The *Wild Ohio Winter Edition* will be delivered to mailboxes soon. We currently have over **45,000 subscriptions!**
- Each magazine has a “Conservation Club Spotlight” page that features conservation clubs in the District. If your club is not included and would like to be added to the list, contact brian.plasters@dnr.ohio.gov.

If you do not receive *Wild Ohio*, you can purchase a subscription by visiting <https://oh-web.s3licensing.com/Home>.



Statewide Updates: Landowner Opportunities

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

- ✓ Administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service in your county
- ✓ Pays for many different land management practices including wetland enhancements, tree planting, native grass and wildflower establishment, invasive species removal, timber stand improvement, etc.

Applications can be submitted any time.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) & Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

- ✓ Administered by Farm Service Agency in your county
- ✓ Land must have cropping history (corn, soy, wheat, etc.)
- ✓ Yearly payments for life of the contract (10-15 years)
- ✓ Establishment costs and incentive payments at sign up for many practices
- ✓ Some practices can be signed up at anytime (riparian areas, filter strips, wetlands, etc.)

General sign-up has been extended. Continuous sign-up practices can be enrolled at any time.

Questions? Contact
Ryan Jackson at
ryan.jackson@dnr.ohio.gov
or 330-245-3023.

Wetland Quality Incentive Program Update

- *It looks like our entire \$5 million allotment will be spoken for! We had 150 applicants for wetland practices (CP23A and CP23) and riparian buffers (CP22).*
- *This is great news for our wildlife habitat and soil and water quality!*

Statewide Updates: Trout Stocking Dates

- Rainbow trout releases will take place across Ohio from March to May, as long as areas are ice-free and accessible to anglers. **This year, many events associated with the stocking are cancelled due to COVID-19.**
- The daily harvest limit for inland lakes is five trout per angler. For more information about trout stockings including how to get to the water areas listed below, visit our [website](#).



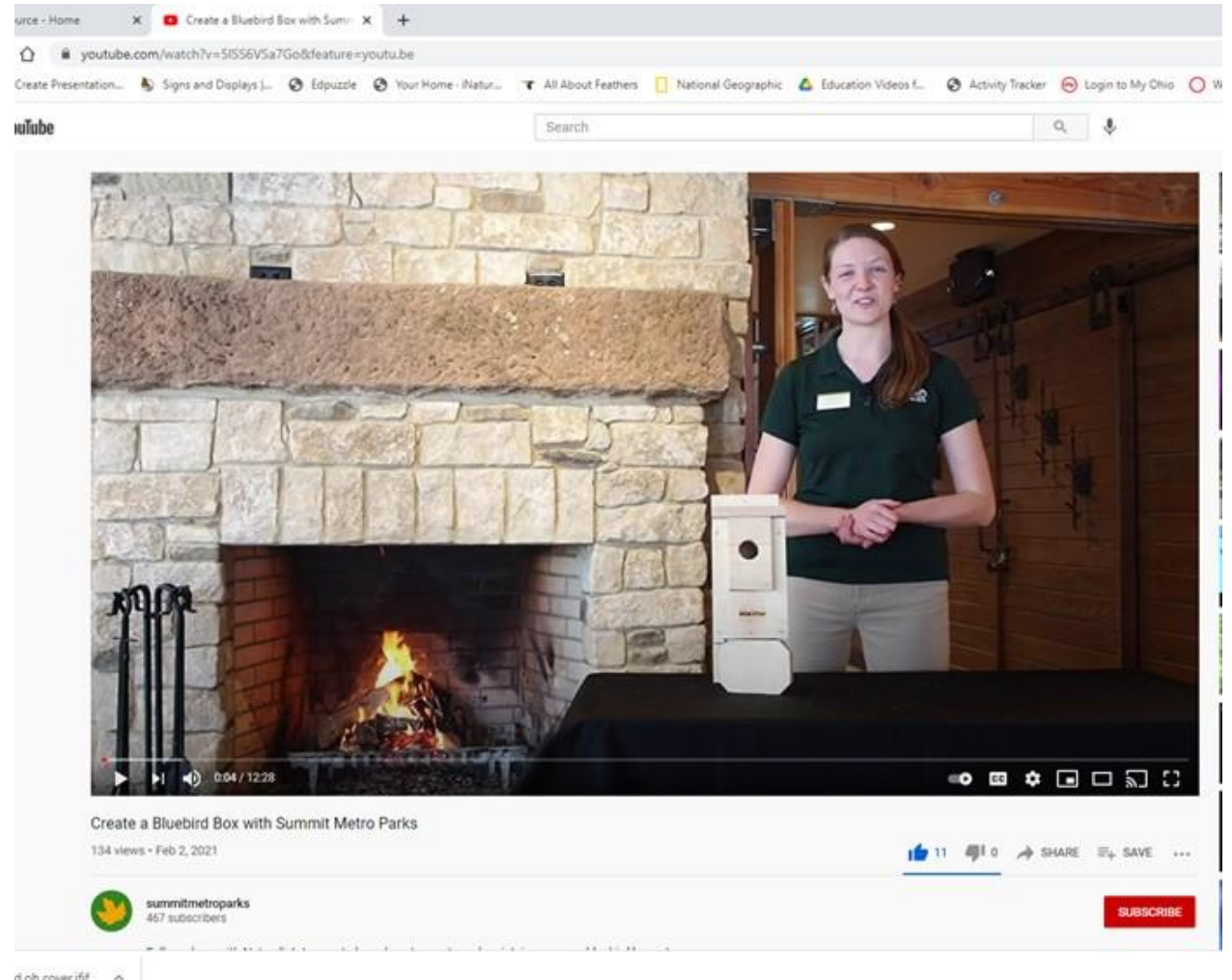
District Three Updates: Message from the D3 Manger, Scott Angelo

- Spring is just around the corner. As nature starts to come alive after a long winter, I hope you take the opportunity to head outside. The outlook for walleye fishing on Lake Erie looks good and remember that turkey season will come in on a Saturday this year. April 17th for the youth season, April 24th for the south zone regular season, and May 1st for the north zone season. Best of luck this spring.
- Open houses to discuss wildlife conservation and regulation changes will not be held in-person this year. Ohioans interested in providing feedback may submit their comments about current hunting and fishing regulation proposals online [here](#) or at wildohio.gov. Comments will be accepted through Sunday, March 14.
 - One regulation proposal would allow antlerless white-tailed deer to be taken from all public hunting areas from Sept. 25, 2021, to Feb. 6, 2022, provided that a hunter takes only one antlerless deer from these lands per license year. A second proposal would expand deer management permits to all 88 Ohio counties from Sept. 25 to Nov. 28, 2021 and allow hunters to use the deer management permit up to the county bag limit.
 - For wild turkey hunters, a proposal calls for a limit of one bearded wild turkey during the 2022 spring hunting season on public hunting lands. The statewide limit this spring remains two bearded birds.



District Three Updates: Bluebird Nest Box Project

- A partnership with Summit Metro Parks where bluebird nest box kits were provided to Summit County residents was a huge success! They are asking for more and the Highlandtown Wildlife Area crew readily agreed to make it happen. View the excellent “how to build and install a bluebird nest box” video produced by metro parks staff: youtu.be/5ISS6V5a7Go



District Three Updates: Footpath Foundation

- Jamey Emmert, Communications Specialist in Akron, and Ann Marie Gorman, fisheries biologist in Fairport Harbor, have recently partnered with Footpath Foundation of Cleveland. This organization focuses on connecting kids of underserved communities with nature to develop personal growth and improve access to the natural world. We are in the early stages of planning the partnership, but we are already discussing many opportunities to connect our organizations including incorporating Project WILD, Passport to Fishing, archery, and more. Learn more about Footpath Foundation:
facebook.com/FootpathFoundation/



District Three Updates: Operation Pollination



- Jamey Emmert, Communications Specialist in Akron, has recently agreed to be involved in a new effort in Mahoning County which is focusing on saving our pollinators. “Operation Pollination” is an inclusive partnership project initiated by Rotary Club International and administered on a local level in the Youngstown area. Many organizations and agencies are involved with this effort which is helping to enhance pollinator habitat on both public and private lands. Learn more: operationpollination.net/

District Three Updates: Education Presentations

- Wildlife education presentations have been provided virtually to accommodate the circumstances we have been experiencing during the pandemic. Most recently, Jamey Emmert, Communications Specialist in Akron, presented “Coyotes of Ohio” and “Comeback Critters: a recovery story of bears, bobcats, otters, & fishers in Ohio” as part of a series of programs hosted by the Portage Park District. Do you know of an organization or a classroom teacher looking for experts to speak about wildlife in Ohio? If so, share this info with them:
ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/education-training/environmental-education/chat-with-biologist



District Three Updates: Virtual Learning



Introduction to Ice Fishing

Benefits of Ice Fishing



- Cameron McCune, Fish Management Technician, and Ken Fry, Outdoor Skills Specialist, joined forces to create an Introductory Ice Fishing Video Series for the Wild Ohio Harvest Community.
- This virtual learning opportunity will feature a series of short videos that provides all the basic knowledge and information needed to begin ice fishing. The videos are in the final editing stage and once completed, they can be found at: <https://ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/education-training/wild-ohio-harvest-community>.

District Three Updates: Wild Ohio Harvest Cookbook

- Ken Fry, Outdoor Skills Specialist, has been heavily involved in the cooking, editing, and contributing content for the Wild Ohio Harvest Cookbook featured in the statewide updates.



District Three Updates: Wild Game/Fish Donation

- Officer Shroyer, Summit County Wildlife Officer, made arrangements with the Haven of Rest Ministries in Akron to receive a donation of wild game and fish. Approximately 200 pounds of venison meat and 100 pounds total of perch, walleye, and saugeye were dropped off.



District Three Updates: Wild Game Cooking

Ken Fry, Outdoor Skills Specialist, was a guest of Mike Krake on Mahoning Valley Sportsman Radio. The conversation focused on how to make wild game relatable and approachable to most!



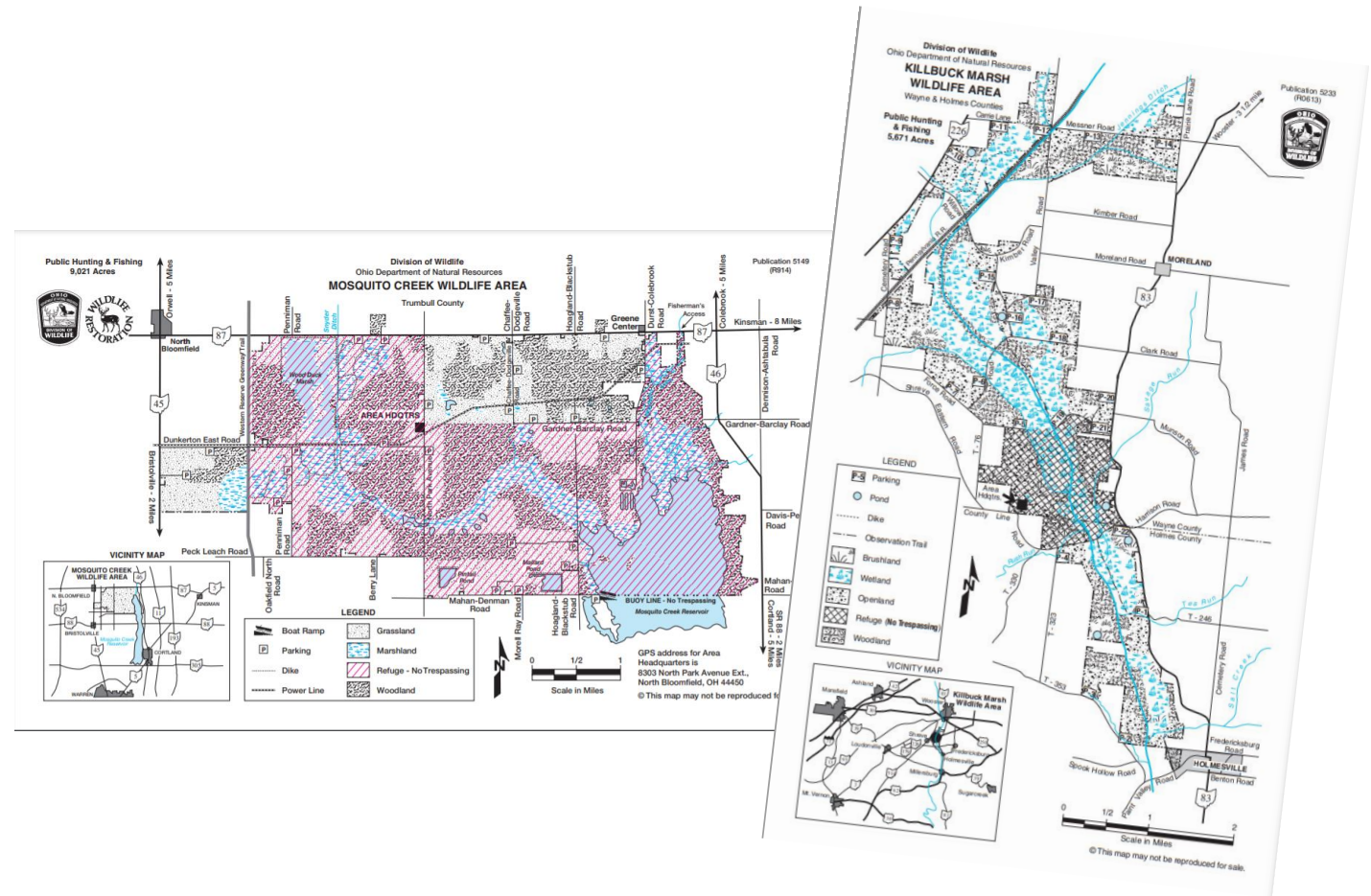
District Three Updates: Here Fishy, Fishy, Fishy

- Christmas tree fish attractor work was completed by District Three Fish Management staff at Michael J. Kirwan Reservoir (West Branch). These were placed in February 2021 off of Knapp Road access in 3-6' of water depth at normal pool. Coordinates can be found on the interactive lake fishing map <https://gis.ohiodnr.gov/MapView/?config=Fishinglakes>



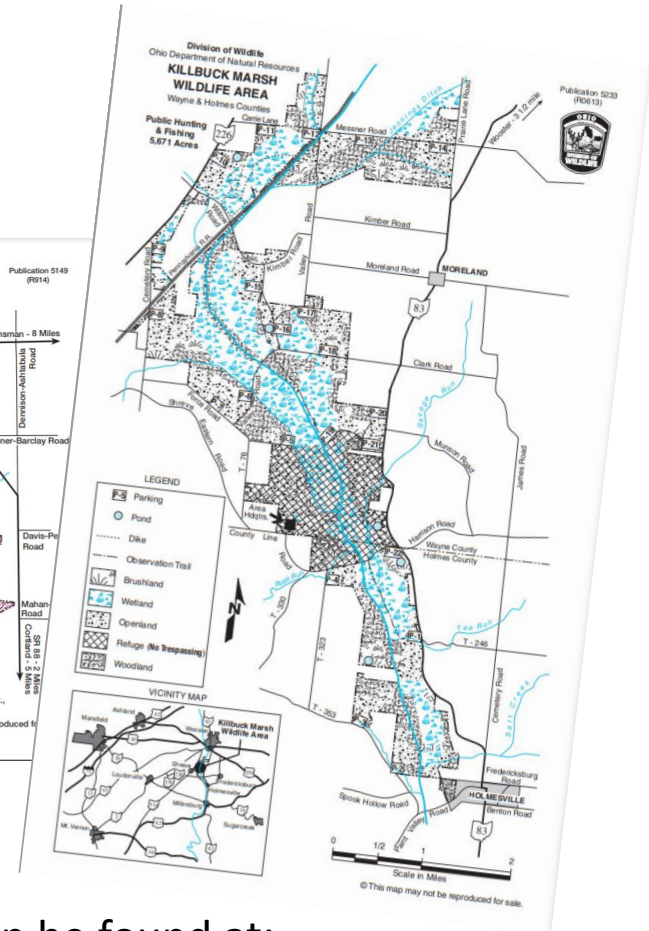
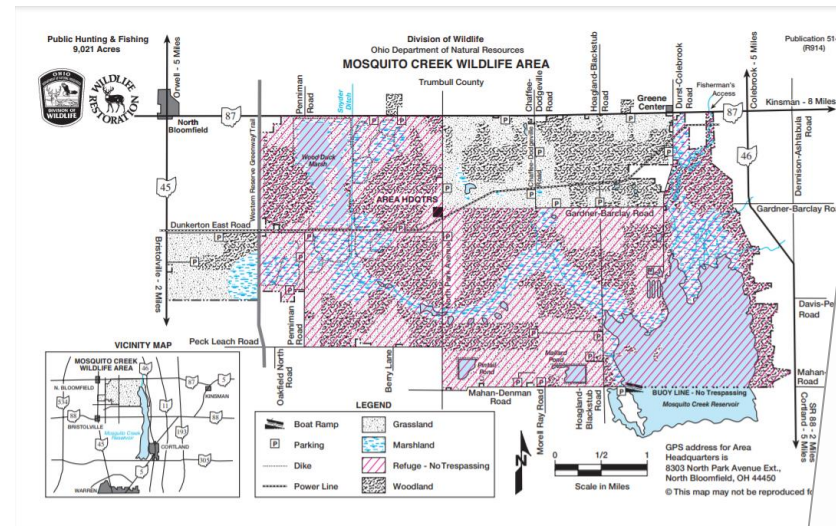
District Three Updates: Controlled Deer Hunts

- Controlled deer hunts at Killbuck Marsh and Mosquito Creek Wildlife Area Refuges were held this past fall. Killbuck Marsh WA has a relatively small refuge (<800 acres with a lot of wetlands and open water) and 15 youths were selected to hunt from our online controlled hunt lottery with three of them harvesting deer. Mosquito Creek WA refuge is large at approximately 7,000 acres. 80 deer were harvested out of 460 youth and adult deer hunters selected in the controlled deer hunt lottery for the Mosquito Creek Wildlife Area Refuge.



District Three Updates: Youth Turkey Hunts Online

- Youth spring turkey hunting opportunities are being offered in our online controlled hunt system with an application period of March 1-31, 2021.
- Applicants will be notified no later than April 10th via email, if they were drawn for a hunt. All applicants are required to have both a hunting license and spring turkey permit before they apply for the lottery.
- There are a total of five statewide spring turkey hunting opportunities in the drawing this year. Eagle Creek and Killdeer Plains Wildlife Areas are offering mentored hunts where the mentee must never have harvested a turkey. Lake La Su An, Killbuck Marsh, and Mosquito Creek Wildlife Areas are open to any youth turkey hunter who applies, whether they have previously harvested a turkey or not.



Controlled access lotteries can be found at:
<https://oh-web.s3licensing.com/Home>

District Three Updates: Berlin Wildlife Area Grassland Establishment and Renovation

- The old adage that states “the only constant in the worldis change” is seldom truer than when speaking of habitat management. We know as wildlife enthusiasts and professionals that perhaps the most beneficial phase of open land habitat is the early successional stage. It just so happens it’s also the hardest to maintain. Vegetation is constantly maturing and changing from season to season, sometimes improving as it matures, but always moving away from the optimum early secessional stage. At Berlin and West Branch wildlife areas we employ multiple techniques to provide differing stages of open land succession. Through mowing, herbicide treatments, mulching, burning and reseeding, we try to provide a mosaic of habitats types to benefit multiple species of wildlife. These techniques have evolved over time with education, equipment advances, staffing changes, and an understanding of the land and how it responds to a given management prescription.



District Three Updates: Berlin Wildlife Area Grassland Establishment and Renovation Continued

- Most winters we evaluate fields and select those with older age class vegetation for renovation. Those plans usually include mulching smaller diameter woody vegetation and removal of larger trees by cutting and grinding stumps. These fields are then selected to either revert naturally or be seeded into more specific wildlife cover. Attention must be paid to the plant community response and often spring herbicide treatments are necessary to accomplish objectives. The fields selected at Berlin this year will be reseeded into warm season grasses and forbs while the fields at West Branch will be allowed to revert naturally. Renovations at Berlin this winter totaled about 31 acres this year while the West Branch total was around 15 acres.



District Three Updates: Conservation Club Creates Habitat for Wildlife

- The Canfield Sportsman and Conservation Club in Mahoning County has always been a great conservation partner to the Ohio Division of Wildlife. For the past five years this club has been very busy actively managing their property's natural resources and improving wildlife habitat condition.
- Everything started when some very wise and motivated members acted by creating a habitat committee that would take charge in managing this conservation club's natural resources. The committee's first step was to contact the Ohio Division of Wildlife's Private Lands Biologist for help to design a wildlife conservation plan that would meet their goal of creating better habitat for wildlife. This plan in time would improve over 140-acres of forestland, grassland, and wetland habitats. Making the right decisions early in habitat management will have a far better outcome when the landowners understand the steps involved in planning, preparation, and implementation of habitat management.



Figure 1 Harvesting trees properly will improve sunlight conditions for growing healthy forest understories and create food and cover for wildlife.



Figure 2 Improving forest heath using forest silviculture harvesting techniques regenerate new oak seedling for future hard mast (acorns). Acorn are used by over 100 sp. of wildlife.

District Three Updates: Conservation Club Creates Habitat for Wildlife Continued

- In Ohio, over 95% of the land is privately owned with an average land size of only 50 acres. This can make wildlife habitat management especially challenging with so many small properties. Working together with neighboring landowners and knowing local and state wildlife habitat concerns will directly improve the quality private land in Ohio. The decisions we make now will sustain our wildlife populations for future generations.
- Financial support was made available with revenues from an improvement harvest of mature and young timber. Utilizing a certified consulting forester or private lands biologist, you can both improve your forest economics and improve your woodlands for hunting and wildlife diversity. A grant was made available from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. This program helps landowners and producers address resource concerns in your county, with conservation practices specially developed for wildlife habitat creation. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) was used on this conservation club to create these wildlife habitat improvements.



Figure 3 Tree planting of oak & hickory tree creates young forest for wildlife that are dependent early successional habitats.

Figure 4 Planting edges of fields with shrubs that produce fruit will increase wildlife food resources and create cover for animals that utilize edges and transitional areas. Tree were also cut down around the fields to improve condition for wildlife cover and songbirds that use these areas.



District Three Updates: Conservation Club Creates Habitat for Wildlife Continued



Figure 5 Controlling invasive plants helps native plants from being out competed. Invasive plant are less desirable to wildlife for food.



Figure 6 Healthy grassland habitat is produces food and cover for native wildlife and is highly beneficial for Bees and pollinating insects.

If your club is interested in habitat enhancement contact Ryan Jackson at ryan.jackson@dnr.ohio.gov or 330-245-3023



Figure 7 Wetland restoration with new water control structures. Water level management is an important tool for managing desirable aquatic vegetation in your wetlands.

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!



wildohio.gov

1-800-WILDLIFE (945-3543)



District 1: Central Ohio
1500 Dublin Road
Columbus, Ohio 43215

District 4: Southeast Ohio
360 E. State Street
Athens, Ohio 45701

District 2: Northwest Ohio
952 Lima Avenue
Findlay, Ohio 45840

District 5: Southwest Ohio
1076 Old Springfield Pike
Xenia, Ohio 45385

District 3: Northeast Ohio
912 Portage Lakes Drive
Akron, Ohio 44319