

Conservation Council launches funding/membership push

Staff Report

Ilion, N.Y. — As it celebrates its 85th anniversary in 2018, the New York State Conservation Council looks to boost membership and raise funds for its advocacy efforts on sporting issues.

The state's single largest sportsmen's group, representing 44 county sportsmen's federations as well as individual hunters, anglers and trappers, was formed in 1933.

Council President Chuck Parker said this year's fundraising and membership push is "not that much different than in past years. Increased use of today's multimedia is allowing us to reach out to more people. We have a strong base of support but that support base needs to be maintained and grown as the years go by. There will always be a need for recruitment of new members and retention of our supporting membership."

The Council weighs in on legislative proposals and works with DEC fish and wildlife officials, the state's Conservation Fund Advisory Board, the state Fish and

Wildlife Management Board, and state lawmakers on issues affecting hunters, anglers and trappers.

The Council's website notes that the organization was formed in 1933 "by people who loved the outdoors experience and wished to preserve and enhance that experience for their children and grandchildren. Since then we have been in continuous operation, giving voice to the concerns of sportsmen and women throughout the state. Our members include the surfcasters and duck hunters of Long Island; the big-game hunters, trappers and freshwater fishermen of central and northern New York; and the small-game hunters and lake fishermen of lakes Erie and Ontario."

In recent years, however, the Council has seen its membership base, including its most active volunteers, age. Parker said the Council recognizes that and is hoping this year's fundraising effort and recruitment drive "will reach out to the next generation of sportsmen advocates and get them. Any group, to remain effective, needs to maintain a

sound financial base, and that requires fundraising."

The Council's website points to numerous issues affecting the state's sportsmen and women, including land use and motorized access.

"We are the consistent voice of conservation and wise use," the website states. "We are asking for your financial support to sustain our work. Please consider making a year-end, tax-deductible donation so that we may continue our efforts on behalf of the sportsmen and women of New York."

Contributions can be made via PayPal on the Council's website: www.nyscc.com or by check to:

NYSCC, Inc., 8 E. Main St., Ilion, NY 13357-1899

The Council can also be identified as a "preferred charity" through the Amazon Smile program. A direct link to the Council's charitable giving page on Amazon can be found on the Council's website or at: smile.amazon.com/ch/16-6056364. Once you sign up, Amazon will donate a portion of every purchase to the NYSCC.

Successful in Vt. moose hunt, but fined for dumping carcass

By Don Lehman

Contributing Writer

Argyle, N.Y. — Moose hunter Raymond Graham didn't set out to cause any problems when he dumped remnants of a moose he legally shot in a ditch off a road near his home.

But the fall's unusually warm weather resulted in quick decomposition and a big stink that prompted complaints from those who lived nearby, and landed the Washington County resident in trouble with the state.

It didn't take residents long to follow their noses and locate the source, and they found the culprit was a moose carcass that had been dumped over an embankment off the road and it was rotting. A moose's head, hoofs, pelt and other parts were dumped just off the road, some parts dragged to nearby parts of a field by predators.

Those who found the remains were initially concerned because illegally shot a moose nearby.

Local police and the state Department of Environmental Conservation were called and conservation officers were able to find clues that led them to a butcher in Vermont, officials said. That butcher provided information that led officers to the Argyle resident Graham, who had won a moose permit in Vermont and had shot a moose in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom earlier this fall during the state's moose hunt.

Graham was ticketed for unlawful disposal of solid waste, a noncriminal violation, according to state records.

Graham said last month that he made a "stupid mistake" and should have buried the remains

of the 665-pound bull moose he shot. The spot where he left the parts is a well-known dumping ground, although he said he hadn't dumped anything there before. The warm weather made it more of an issue, he said.

"I admitted what I did and paid the fine," Graham explained. "I thought the coyotes would get it and drag it off. They did eventually, but it took a few days. I

should have just dug a hole and buried it."

He didn't say how much the fine was.

One of the people who lives nearby and found the rotting carcass, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said other animal parts have been dumped there, including deer remains and meat in coolers, buckets and black plastic bags on and off for years.

She showed a reporter numerous photos of what she had found along the road, including bones, animal skulls and fur.

"It's every year, all year round," she said. "It never stops. There was once a calf with a mattress on top of it about 10 years ago. I have lived in Argyle for a long time and it never stops."

The DEC is also looking into illegal dumping of deer carcasses about 15 miles away in Moreau, Saratoga County last fall. The problem of illegal dumping of animal remains by hunters plagues rural parts of the area each fall.

State law requires that unwanted game meat be disposed of in the trash, as other unwanted meat is.

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John Moser, of Lowville, caught this northern pike while fishing Perch Lake on Dec. 30.

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Outdoor Writer Leo Maloney

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