**STRAITS AREA SPORTSMEN’S CLUB**

 P.O. Box 764

St. Ignace, Michigan 49781

2017 Newsletter

Fellow club members and interested parties,

Our club is involved in a multitude of activities intended to provide enjoyable and memorable outdoor experiences. To review some of the activities of the past year in which our club has participated, the following are considered most significant as they have had a large and positive impact on this area. We look forward to another event-filled and successful year!

**Hunter Safety Education Course**

Thanks to the efforts of Mark Eby, Kevin Monte, Jim Rose, the Mackinac Straits Shooters Association, and member volunteers from our club to make the 2017 Hunter Safety Education Course a success. We will again certify another class of young sports people in Spring 2017.

**Tracks Magazine**

As in 2016, this year we will again sponsor the MUCC Tracks Magazine program to provide the magazine to fifth graders in Rudyard, St. Ignace and Moran Township school districts.

**Kids Fishing Day (KFD)**

This program is one of the most rewarding for those club members who participate in this event.

In 2016 over 150 kids registered, with over 378 people in attendance throughout the day. This year the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be again adding 1,000 brook trout to this event which will add a lot of enjoyment and smiles to the kids that catch the brook trout. Congratulations and thank you to our 28 volunteers, the Hiawatha National Forest Service, the State of Michigan DNR, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, and the U.P. Chapter of Ruffed Grouse Society for their combined efforts to make this event a success. In addition, we would like to thank all the donors whose contributions made this event possible.

The 2017 KFD will be our 21st annual event. The event will again be held on the free fishing weekend to take place on Saturday, June 10th. All club members are invited and encouraged to participate in the 2016 KFD. We need and appreciate YOUR help!

**Big Buck Contest**

There were 72 entries in the SASC contest in 2016. Due to 2014-15 harsh winter, the season’s deer kill was still down and hunters registered only 15 deer. Shane Redmand won 1st place, 2nd place went to Tom Colegrove, and 3rd place went to Curtis Hethelington.

The Sportsmen’s Club sponsored a prize for the DNRs Deer Camp Survey in December 2016. The deer camp survey is used to monitor deer sightings, deer harvest, and hunter opinions during the

16-day firearm season. It provides hunters and DNR staff with feedback on the status of the deer herd and hunting satisfaction soon after the season ends. Beginning in the early 1990’s, deer camps have been casually recruited into the survey over the years by word of-mouth, visiting camps, using club membership lists, or sign-ups at banquets.

**Brevort Lake**

The Straits Area Sportsmen’s Club has a five-year partnership with the DNR to raise walleye fingerlings for Brevort Lake. Starting in the spring of 2013 we stocked 39,000 walleye fingerlings in the lake and seeing that in our partnership we only stock the lake every second year so 2014 was an off year. Than again in 2015 we stocked 51,262 walleye fry into the lake. This year again 2017 we will be working with our DNR partners to stock the lake with walleye fingerlings hopefully 40,000. Also this year we are planning to do a walleye fundraiser to help cover our costs and to maybe purchase or raise larger walleyes which have a better success rate of growing to a legal catchable size.

Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program is a DEQ run program that monitors lakes throughout Michigan. Club member Art Bombry’s hard work pays off in knowing that there are no contaminants in the lake and that it is biologically in good shape.

**Citizens for Professional Wildlife Management**

The SASC strongly supports the scientific fish and wildlife law. This was a citizen-initiated law that gathered 374,000 signatures and was passed by both the Michigan House and Senate and became law on April 30, 2015. But as most of you know The inhumane Society of America with their endless supply of money had a Michigan Court of Appeals overturn the Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act on Nov. 23, 2016. Based on that Scientific Fish and Wildlife law has nothing to do with giving free hunting and fishing licenses to active duty military personal which was included in the law. Now for the good news, in December of last year the Michigan Legislature along with the governor passed a new Scientific Fish and Wildlife law that is basically the same as the first but minus the free hunting and fishing licenses for active duty military personnel.

**North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants**

Partnerships with the Michigan DNR, and area clubs such as Ducks Unlimited, the Sault Area Sportsmen’s Club, Raber Area Sportsmen’s Club, and others is in place to make application for available federal grants to help support wildlife in our area. Notification has been received that this grant has been approved and it will be implemented this summer. Funds will be used to protect and restore habitat for breeding migratory game birds and other wildlife species

**Wolves**

As most of you know, a federal judge has relisted the wolf as an endangered species for the fourth time in ten years. The SASC is working with Congressman Jack Bergman, Safari Club International, The Upper Peninsula Sportsmen’s Alliance and the Michigan United Conservation Club to pass into law through the United States Congress a bill that will remove the gray wolf as an endangered species PERMANENTLY! We are hoping that happens later this year.

**Cormorant Harassment**

This year the SASC, in cooperation with the U.S. Wildlife Services and the DNR, will only be allowed to harass cormorants on Brevort Lake no shooting will take place. Last May 25, 2016 a U.S. District Court vacated our Public Reasource Depredation Order for double-crested cormorants until the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prepares an adequate Environmental Assessment. As you might know this is very alarming to us in that we have been working very hard to building up the fisheries in our area. Cormorants will wipe out fish populations very quickly if allowed to remain unchecked. As an example it was estimated that cormorants in the early 2000s were consuming 13,900 size 1 walleyes annually on Brevort Lake. We have been working with Rep. Jack Bergmans Washington D.C. office, SCI, UPSA and the MUCC trying to get this problem resolved.

**CWD**

 Chronic Wasting Disease. The SASC will be working full throttle to inform as many people as possible about this horrible disease. CWD effects the central nervous systems in deer, elk, moose and caribou. It attacks the brain in infected animals which eventually leads to death. There is really no cure for this disease so we have to work on prevention as of now that is the only tool we have. The SASC will be working with the DNR and all of our partners to inform hunters about preventative ways to prevent CWD from entering our state.

**SASC Representation in the Following Organizations and Committees.**

MUCC

Michigan Conservation Coalition

Upper Peninsula Sportsmen’s Alliance

Michigan Sharptail Grouse Association

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Deer Management Meetings DNR

National Rifle Association

NRA-ILA

DNR Citizen Advisory Council

DNR Coalition Meetings

RAC Forest Service

Safari Club International

U.P CWD Task Force DNR

As you can see, the Straits Area Sportsmen’s Club is involved in and supports many activities. You, as a member of the club, will help to continue our support of all hunting, fishing and trapping in our area. Please be sure to send your annual dues of $25.00 (for membership only), or $45.00 (which includes the “Michigan Out-Of-Doors” magazine).

To: Straits Area Sportsmen’s Club

 P.O. Box 764

 St. Ignace MI. 49781

Sincerely,

Gary V. Gorniak

Gary V. Gorniak, President

Straits Area Sportsmen’s Club