**STRAITS AREA SPORTSMEN'S CLUB**

**P.O. Box 764 St. Ignace, Michigan 49781**

 **2025 NEWSLETTER**

Fellow Club Members and Interested Parties,

Our club actively participates in various activities to provide enjoyable and memorable outdoor experiences. Below is a summary of the Straits Area Sportsmen's Club (SASC) activities over the past year and plans for the current year. These efforts have significantly and positively impacted our area, and we look forward to another eventful and successful year.

**SASC Banquet**: The Straits Area Sportsmen's Club will hold its second banquet on May 3, 2025, at the Little Bear Arena in St. Ignace, Michigan. Doors open at 4:30 PM, with dinner served at 7 PM. Dinner tickets are $65.00 per person, with only 144 tickets available. Audie's Restaurant from Mackinaw City will cater the event.

Various games, raffles, silent and live auctions, and prizes will include 18 guns, Rapid River Knives, hunting or fishing packages, and a mystery blind prize worth over $750.00. Dinner tickets go on sale on April 8, 2025. For ticket information, contact Fred Strich at 906-430-0857 or fstrich@earthlink.net.

**Tracks Magazine:**  SASC continues to sponsor the annual MUCC "Tracks" Magazine Program, providing magazines to Moran Township, St. Ignace City school fifth graders, and Rudyard Middle School library.

**Sending a Kid to Camp**: This year, SASC will sponsor a local youth (age 13-15) to attend a MUCC Youth Hunting Camp to enhance their hunting and shooting skills.

**Louie's Kids Fishing Day (KFD):**  Mark your June 7, 2025, calendar! This annual event, celebrating its 26th year, will occur at Castle Rock Ponds during the Free Fishing Weekend. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Jordan River Fish Hatchery will provide 1,000 rainbow trout, and an additional tank of larger 15-18" trout will be provided for the kids to catch. All club members are invited and encouraged to participate. We appreciate your support!

**Deer Range Improvement Program (DRIP):**  We will apply for another Michigan DNR Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative Grant in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service. Our goal is to enhance deer forage opportunities in the St. Martin wintering deer complex. Over the past six years with our partners, we have enhanced and create hundreds of acres of wildlife habitat in the East Hiawatha National Forest. This will bring our wildlife habitat total dollar amount to $280,255.00 of completed wildlife habitat work over the past years.

**Big Buck Contest:**  The 2024 contest had 72 entries, with 22 deer registered. Winners were:

1. Jeremy Peters (First Place)
2. Mark MacDonald (Second Place)
3. Curtis Hetherington (Third Place)

The fifteen top hunters who registered a deer received prize. Congratulations to all participants!

**Deer Camp Surveys:**  SASC sponsors a prize for the DNR's Deer Camp Survey during firearm deer season. This survey over the past thirty years monitors deer sightings, harvest data, and hunter opinions, providing critical information on the U.P. deer herd's status.

**Brevort Lake Walleye Stocking:**  After carefully assessing our goals with the DNR, we will continue stocking larger 6-9" fall walleyes instead of spring walleyes due to their higher survival rate. Spring walleyes have a catch rate of about 1%, fall walleyes have a catch rate of around 65% more cost but much better results. The amount we stock will depend on the funding we have available at the time. We currently anticipate stocking 3,500-4,000 fall walleyes. Donations to our Walleye Fund can be made via mail (P.O. Box 764, St. Ignace, MI 49781) or online through PayPal. All donations are tax-deductible!

**SASC Historic Walleye Stocking Data**

* Spring stocking (2013-2019): 186,404 (1¾-inch walleyes)
* Fall stocking (2018-2024): 14,679 (6-9" walleyes)
* Total cost (2013-2024): $41,502.00

**Grey Wolves:**  Grey wolves have been relisted on the Federal Endangered Species List despite surpassing recovery goals for over twenty years. The U.P. deer population has suffered significantly due to unchecked wolf predation. In 2024, only 20,103 deer were registered in the U.P.- far below the 40,000-50,000 from past seasons. We anticipate the wolf will be removed from the ESL this year, returning management authority to The State of Michigan.

**U.P. Wolves Only Facebook Page:** SASC launched a Facebook page to educate the public on wolf activity in the U.P. With over 3,521 recent wolf pictures and 2,900 followers, this platform provides valuable insights into wolf populations and their impact on local wildlife.

**Cormorant Harassment Program:** Again, this year SASC is permitted only to harass cormorants on Brevort Lake—no shooting is allowed. Cormorants severely threaten fish populations, consuming nearly 10 million pounds of fish annually in Michigan. Volunteers are needed to assist in harassment efforts to protect our fisheries. We have worked hard to bring back our fisheries! Let's work together to prevent the cormorants from having a smorgasbord on our fish.

**Fishing, Hunting, and Trapping Advocacy:**  Fishermen, Hunters and Trappers are the lead conservationist in North America. We are a fishing, hunting and trapping organization; we support the scientific management of our fisheries and wildlife. Hunters, fisherman and trappers have funded the vast majority of our wildlife and fisheries management in Michigan, which has proved to be successful. Since the North American model of wildlife conservation was implemented no hunted species has been even close to be endangered since its founding. In fact, just the opposite has happened, and numerous species have flourished and expanded their range through hunter effort and support. The SASC will continue to educate and inform the public about our fisheries and wildlife to protect us from animal rights activists who bombard us with pictures of starving and mistreated animals to increase their financing to support their attorneys.

**SASC Online Presence:**  Join the over 2,000 followers on our Facebook page 'Straits Area Sportsmen's Club', Instagram (@straits\_area\_sportsmens\_club), and our website: <https://straitsareasportsmensclub.net/home> Our platforms provide updates on activities such as Louie's Kid's Fishing Day, DRIP Grants, Great Lakes Restoration, Cormorant Harassment, Walleye Stocking, and more.

**Straits Area Sportsmen's Club Surveys**

The SASC has conducted several surveys over the past few years to understand the viewpoints of our members and followers. This will help our club members on several State, Upper Peninsula, MUCC Boards, and Local Committees. The results of these surveys can be found on our website: <https://straitsareasportsmensclub.net/home> under the Education tab.

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

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| * DNR DMT Deer Management Team
 | * Ruffed Grouse Society
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| * DNR Citizen Advisory Council
 | * Safari Club International
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| * DNR Coalition Meetings
 | * Safari Club International Northwood's Chapter
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| * Deer Workgroups
 | * Three Shores CISMA
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| * Michigan Conservation Coalition
 | * Upper Peninsula Sportsmen's Alliance
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| * Michigan United Conservation Club; Vice President, Board of Directors, and Conservation Policy Board
 | * U.P. Fisheries Advisory Committee
* Michigan Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus
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| * National Rifle Association
 | * U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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| * Sharp-tail Grouse Association
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As you can see, the Straits Area Sportsmen's Club is involved in and supports many activities. As a club member, you will help continue our support of all hunting, fishing, and trapping. Please send your annual dues of $35.00 or $40 if you use PayPal before May 1, 2025. You can mail your membership dues to the address below or visit our website, where you can pay using a major credit card or PayPal.

Also, as a Straits Area Sportsmen's Club member, you receive a membership in the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) and the Upper Peninsula Sportsmen's Alliance (UPSA). If you would like more information about the SASC, visit our Facebook page, Straits Area Sportsmen's Club, or email us at sasc764@gmail.com

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in the Straits Area Sportsmen's Club!

Our mailing address 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