



## Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

**Date of Production: June 2025** (information current as of 6/9/25)

This documentation is provided by Michigan DNR staff as supplemental information to Eastern UPCAC members.

### Meetings/Events/Press Releases

#### Upcoming DNR Public Meetings

For virtual or conference call meeting information, please go to the DNR website at: [DNR Meetings](#) and click on the appropriate meeting and/or agenda for instructions.

June 10	Michigan Iron Industry Museum Advisory Board, 3pm (906-475-7857)
June 11	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board, 9am (517-284-5954)
June 12	Michigan Natural Resources Commission, 9:30am (Coffee with the Commissioners 8:30am) (NRC@michigan.gov)
June 16	Eastern UP Citizens Advisory Council, 6pm (906-226-1331)
June 20	Timber and Forest Products Advisory Council, 10am (517-582-3204)
June 30	Board of Foresters, 3pm (989-370-9557)
July 10	Michigan Natural Resources Commission, 9am (NRC@michigan.gov)
July 24	Western UP Citizens Advisory Council, 6pm (906-226-1331)

#### UP State Park, State-Sponsored & Other UP Activities

Please check with the state park before attending activity for any scheduling changes. For all activities: [DNR Things to Do Calendar](#)

**Check out these links regularly for upcoming Spring/Summer nature events held at these state parks:**

- [Van Riper State Park Explorer Guide Program Schedule](#)
- [McLain State Park Explorer Guide Schedule](#)
- [Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park Explorer Guide Schedule](#)
- [Wells State Park Explorer Guide Schedule](#)
- [DNR Pocket Park-Escanaba Program Schedule](#)
- [Indian Lake State Park Explorer Guide Schedule](#)
- [Tahquamenon Falls State Park Explorer Guide Schedule](#)

#### Recent DNR Press Releases

For full details, go to: [DNR Press Room](#)

- Forests help protect your drinking water (6/3/25)
- Start protecting your favorite places from invasive species during PlayCleanGo Awareness Week, June 7-14 (6/3/25)
- DNR News: Turtle-tracking dogs, bat roosts, field guides & more (6/2/25)
- DNR battling small fire near Carney Lake in Dickinson County (6/2/25)
- Get outside for 'Three Free' Weekend June 7-8 (6/2/25)
- DNR Sucker River project set to start in Alger County (6/2/25)
- Fire risk is high up north; use care with campfires (5/30/25)
- DNR News: Landscape/firewood surveys, outdoor fun, ways (5/29/25)
- DNR awards \$148,300 in deer habitat improvement grants in the U.P. (5/28/25)
- DNR's June meetings cover parks, timber, waterways and more (5/27/25)
- Michigan Army National Guard training set to begin at UP state park facilities (5/27/25)
- How can you help baby wildlife this spring? Leave them alone (5/21/25)
- DNR News: Holiday fun, outdoor safety smarts (5/20/25)
- NotMISpecies webinar: Detecting invasive plants in Michigan lakes (5/20/25)

- Michigan fish, aquatic systems to benefit from \$1.1 million in grants (5/19/25)
- Prioritize safety when cleaning up storm-damaged trees (5/16/25)
- Showcasing the DNR: Seeking spring outdoor adventures in the UP (5/16/25)

## Grant Contacts

For grant information, to go: [DNR Grants](#)

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|---|--|
| ▪ Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant   | Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, <a href="mailto:carlockm@michigan.gov">carlockm@michigan.gov</a>                             |
| ▪ Recreation Passport Grant                     | Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, <a href="mailto:carlockm@michigan.gov">carlockm@michigan.gov</a>                             |
| ▪ Michigan Spark Grants (Public Recreation)     | Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, <a href="mailto:carlockm@michigan.gov">carlockm@michigan.gov</a>                             |
| ▪ ORV Trail Improvement Fund                    | Richard Kennedy, 517-284-7275, <a href="mailto:kennedyr@michigan.gov">kennedyr@michigan.gov</a>                            |
| ▪ Fisheries Habitat Grant Program               | Chip Kosloski, 517-281-1705, <a href="mailto:kosloskic3@michigan.gov">kosloskic3@michigan.gov</a>                          |
| ▪ Michigan Invasive Species Grant               | Erin Campbell, 269-300-9698, <a href="mailto:campbelle6@michigan.gov">campbelle6@michigan.gov</a>                          |
| ▪ Wildlife Habitat Grant                        | Chip Kosloski, 517-281-1705, <a href="mailto:kosloskic3@michigan.gov">kosloskic3@michigan.gov</a>                          |
| ▪ UP Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Grant | Bill Scullon, 906-563-9247, <a href="mailto:scullonh@michigan.gov">scullonh@michigan.gov</a>                               |
| ▪ Forestry Grants                               | <a href="http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/forestry">www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/forestry</a> |
| ▪ Land & Water Conservation Fund                | Christie Bayus, 517-242-8737, <a href="mailto:bayusc@michigan.gov">bayusc@michigan.gov</a>                                 |
| ▪ Waterways Program Grants                      | Curt Wemple, 231-444-8029, <a href="mailto:wemplec1@michigan.gov">wemplec1@michigan.gov</a>                                |
| ▪ Law Enforcement & Safety Grants               | <a href="https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/le">https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/buy-and-apply/grants/le</a>    |

## Western UPCAC Update

The **Western UP Citizens Advisory Council** met on May 1, in person in Harris. The Council heard an overview of the DNR's drone program and the results of the UP deer camp survey. They also considered and passed two wildlife recommendations in support of ongoing moose research efforts and developing a framework for a regulated wolf hunting and trapping season. Additional business included approving bylaws revisions, reports from various division staff, old business items, and subcommittee reports. The Council's next meeting will be on July 24 in Ontonagon.

More information on both the Western and Eastern CACs can be found at [www.michigan.gov/upcac](http://www.michigan.gov/upcac).

## May NRC Meeting Recap – Ed Golder, Public Information Officer

The Natural Resources Commission met on the West Campus of Lansing Community College on May 8.

Director Scott Bowen approved seven land transactions. Details are in the [online agenda](#).

The Commission approved:

- [Small game regulations](#), which include an expansion of the December pheasant hunting zone. This will create expanded opportunity and will have no expected impacts on populations. The regulations also include a number of minor technical adjustments to the Wildlife Conservation Order.
- [Fall turkey regulations](#), which expand opportunity for hunters and reduce regulation complexity. The new regulations shrink fall turkey management units to just two – one in the Upper Peninsula and one in the Lower Peninsula. There will be no license draws, and all general licenses will be valid for all lands. There will be a limit of one license per person.
- [Deer regulations](#), which will allow for antlered harvest during the Liberty Hunt and the Independence Hunt. The NRC had removed that opportunity last year, effective for the 2025 deer seasons. Because of today's action, antlered harvest will continue for those hunts without interruption. The commission also approved allowing for antlerless harvest during the bow season on a single deer license or a deer combination license throughout the Upper Peninsula by approving [an amendment put forward by Commissioner John Walters](#). Currently, antlerless harvest is prohibited during the bow season in some portions of the U.P. Two other proposed amendments -- [one from Commissioner Walters](#) and [one from Commissioner LaPorte](#) – were withdrawn and did not pass. The regulations also included a number of administrative changes to the Wildlife Conservation Order.

The Commission postponed indefinitely action that would have made the coyote hunting season year round.

### **Committee of the Whole, Director's Report**

Louise Klarr of the Shikar Safari Club International presented the Shikar Safari Officer of the Year Award to Conservation Officer Justin Ulberg. The annual award is the highest state honor for conservation officers, recognizing those who demonstrate exceptional dedication to natural resource protection, law enforcement and community engagement. CO Ulberg, who patrols Kent County, demonstrates a high level of trust and professionalism within his community, navigating from Grand River fish patrols in downtown Grand Rapids, to cold, rainy waterfowl patrols in rural fields. In 2024, more than 170 tips reported through the DNR's Report All Poaching hotline listed CO Ulberg as the primary officer. This is in addition to the many tips reported directly to CO Ulberg. CO Ulberg has strong relationships across a wide range of communities. He assists at police training programs through high school tech centers, attends events hosted by various outdoor groups, and volunteers to staff booths at hunting and fishing expos. A member of the DNR Law Enforcement Division since 2014, he serves many internal roles as well, including district recruiter, survival tactics instructor, TASER instructor, firearms instructor, field training officer and instructor at the CO training academy.

Bob Jones, president of the Michigan Bow Hunters Association, presented to Chad Stewart of the Wildlife Division their 2025 Conservation Award. Wildlife Chief Sara Thompson lauded Chad for his relentless work ethic, and for his ability to listen to and balance a variety of conflicting views around deer management. Chad is a nationally recognized voice in deer management, Sara said.

Chris Kemp and Kendra Kozlauskos from the Fisheries Division presented information about the department's Inland Sportfishing Guide Program. In 2023 the Legislature approved a law that creates licensing requirements for inland sportfishing guides and requires regular reporting from these guides. The program began last year, requiring background checks for guides and other prerequisites. Guides are required to report certain details of their guided trips, including the number of hours fished, species targeted, where they fished and how many fish were kept and released. The department has issued 576 licenses so far under the new program. Data from the first year offered significant detail on where fish are being caught, which species are being targeted, effort on particular water bodies and a number of other factors. In subsequent years, the department will be able to track trends around these data points.

Matt Diana and Heather Hettinger from Fisheries gave a presentation on the Centrarchid Committee. Centrarchids are a family of fish that include pan fish and black bass. Matt talked about how important pan fish are to fishing in Michigan, especially for entry level anglers and young anglers, a conclusion supported by department creel data. The department is working on a management plan for panfish and has undertaken a survey to gauge public interest and determine what management might look like. The Centrarchid Committee will provide input into management recommendations.

A report on legislation affecting the department was given to commissioners and is listed below.

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### ***How to Participate in the NRC Meetings***

- If you're unable to attend the meeting but wish to submit written comments on agenda items, please write to: Natural Resources Commission, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, MI 48909 or email: [nrc@michigan.gov](mailto:nrc@michigan.gov).
- If you would like further information or would like to address the Commission, please contact [nrc@michigan.gov](mailto:nrc@michigan.gov). Persons registering on or before the Friday preceding the meeting will be allowed up to five (5) minutes for their presentation. Persons registering after the Friday preceding the meeting or at the meeting will be allowed up to three (3) minutes. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations should contact the NRC Assistant.
- Look for the agendas and other Natural Resources Commission items at the Natural Resources Commission webpage ([www.michigan.gov/NRC](http://www.michigan.gov/NRC)).

### ***May Legislative Updates – Chris Semrinec, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office***

**HB 4013 – Modifies the Responsibilities of Property Owners Under the Recreational Trespassing Law – Rep. Slagh:** This bill amends the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require property owners to post signs at an interval of not more than 250 along the boundary of the property.

- The bill passed the House and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Agriculture.

- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

**HB 4029 – Requires Postings of Rule and Regulation Change by a Certain Date – Rep. Slagh:** This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require any regulation changes or orders issued for the taking of game by the Natural Resources Commission to be issued by June 1st. Orders issued after this will not be valid until the following year's season. Guides must be published and printed and available to the public no later than August 15th.

- This bill has passed the House and was transmitted to the Senate.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

**HB 4350 – Allow Supplemental Feeding of Wildlife – Rep. Borton:** This bill amends the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow for the feeding of wildlife and birds if both of the following conditions are met: the feed is located within 300 feet from a residence and the quantity of feed placed, scattered, or distributed within 300 feet of that residence does not exceed two gallons.

- The bill was referred to the House Committee Natural Resources and Tourism.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

**HB 4401 – Eliminates the Sunset on the Pheasant License – Rep. Greene:** This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to remove the sunset on the Pheasant License.

- The bill was referred to the House Committee Natural Resources and Tourism.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

**SB 238 – Extends Sunset on the Pheasant License – Sen. Daley:** This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to extend the sunset on the Pheasant License to 2031.

- This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Agriculture.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

**SB 276 & 277 – License Fee Increase Package – Sens. Cherry and Bumstead:** These bills would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act and the General Sales Tax Act to revise the structure of hunting and fishing licenses and increase license fees and provide reimbursement for discounted licenses.

- These bills were referred to the Senate Committee Appropriations.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

**SB 280 & 281 – Includes Recreation Passport Fee in Vehicle Registration – Sens. Cherry and Bumstead:** These bills would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code and the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to include the Recreation Passport in with every vehicle registration fee, unless otherwise exempt.

- These bills were referred to the Senate Committee Appropriations.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

*If you would like to learn more about any bills listed, you can access the Michigan Legislature website at <https://www.legislature.mi.gov>.*

## Division Updates

### **Finance & Operations Division: Becky Randazzo, Eastern UP**

#### Season Dates to Remember

For regulation guides: <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/managing-resources/laws/regulations>

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 6/21 | Bass possession season opens on Lake St. Clair, St. Clair R, Detroit R, Boundary Waters     |
| 6/23 | Bear & elk drawing results posted on website  |
| 7/1  | May apply for fall turkey hunts   |
| 7/8  | Dog training opens; closes April 15 may also use dogs for night hunting (see Fur Digest)    |
| 7/15 | Coyote season opens   |
| 7/15 | May apply for the UP antlerless deer access permits; can also apply for reserved deer hunts |
| 7/15 | Opener for turtle seasons (snappers and softshell), see p. 22)                              |
| 7/16 | Sturgeon opener (for list of open waterbodies/regulations, see p. 15)                       |

## **Forest Resources Division (FRD): Scott Lakosky, Eastern UP**

### **Timber Sales**

- Newberry FMU
  - Newberry had 5 scheduled timber bid dates during April–May offering 9 separate timber sales. To date, the 5 offered sales sold with decent competition, 2 sales went unsold. 2 sales are being bid out in late May.
  - Logging activity in the area is down. At the time of this report, there are no active sales on the Newberry unit. Several loggers are working on storm clean-up in the south and the northern lower peninsula or are working in other areas.
  - Timber: 2025 timber sales are being prepped by DNR staff and contractors. Forest inventory is being conducted for 2027 forestry treatment plans.
- Sault Ste. Marie FMU
  - As of May 28, there are 3 active sales on the state forest. The number of active sales has dropped recently as some loggers have gone below the bridge to assist with ice storm clean up.
  - There were 3 bid openings in the Sault unit during April and May. Seven sales were sold and six went no bid.
- Shingleton FMU
  - 3 sales sold since the last report. All were pine or hardwood, and they had good interest.
  - This was a very long breakup for producers in which we had a lot of activity. Now that restrictions have lifted loggers are moving about in all types.
  - Working on extensions for the end of June. It seems like many of the lower ground sales will be returned rather than extended.

### **Forest Inventory**

- Forest inventory field work is well over halfway done for each unit with some nearly complete.
- Pre-review meetings will begin in July.

### **Cultivation**

- EUP planting is complete for 2025. 3 crews planting throughout the district from May 12-21. One crew was designated solely for the oak planting project in Mackinac County near Garnet.
  - 100,800 jack pine planted
  - 710,400 red pine planted
  - 6,000 red oak planted
  - 4,950 white pine planted
- An oak planting project in west Mackinac County was completed. 6000 red oaks were planted inside of protective tubes and intermixed with red and white pine seedlings.
- The EUP has 45 acres of pre-commercial thinning contracted for this year. The work should begin mid to late June.
- Roller chopping has begun in west Mackinac County with 540 acres planned across the EUP.
- 651 acres of trenching is planned with the first site in Mackinac County finished.
- 357 acres of scarification is planned for DNR staff to complete, and 418 acres will be completed by contractors.
- Adjustments and evaluations of roller chopping and trenching sites are continuous. Some sites may be moved to unfurrowed planting where possible.
- 40 acres of red pine fertilization was completed on April 28. This was done to increase seed/cone production. This site will be harvested soon with plans to collect cones from the harvested treetops.
- Aerial site prep is scheduled to begin in mid-July with 1,119 acres planned.
- Skidder prep work is scheduled to begin in late June with 141 acres planned.
- 400 acres of site prep work is planned to be completed by drone. This is the first time this method will be used in the EUP.
- Mastication is planned this summer on the Thompsen Plains red pine seed orchard to reduce deciduous competition.

### **Fire**

- Newberry FMU
  - 4 staff assigned to IMT for ice storm response and clean-up in early April.
  - 1 statistical fire in the Newberry unit during this period.
  - Daily staffing for fire response including supporting adjoining units.
  - PMI's and equipment repairs were completed.
  - New dozer/transport/trailer and UTV w/ pump package were put into service.

- Sault Ste. Marie FMU
  - Responded to 5 wildfires totaling 18.3 acres. 6 residences threatened, 8 outbuildings threatened, 1 outbuilding lost.
  - DNR staff provided fire shelter training for Dafter Township Fire Department.
  - All equipment is in service and ready for dispatch.
  - Three staff responded with the Incident Management Team to the northern lower peninsula ice storm.
  - Engadine Elementary School visited the Naubinway Office where staff provided wildfire awareness/prevention, and fire truck demonstrations.
- Shingleton FMU: A couple small fires and one 9-acre fire near Indian Lake.

### **Road & Bridge**

- Newberry FMU:
  - 2 culvert replacements & associated road washout repairs along Camp 7 Road and Charcoal Grade. Working on others late May as well.
- Sault Ste. Marie FMU:
  - Provided the Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) with an equalization culvert for the forest road entering Munuscong State Forest Campground. The equalization culvert was installed the week of May 19 by PRD staff.
  - Carp River truck trail has a failing culvert. The area is flagged for the public with the Forest Resources Division (FRD) and PRD working on a plan for replacement.
  - Multiple staff assisted with the ice storm response in the northern lower peninsula with road clearing, including one dozer from Sault Ste. Marie that was in Emmett County for over three weeks in April.
  - The project to remove McAlpine Dam in Mackinac County was bid out. Plans are to remove the structure this summer.
- Shingleton FMU: One large project is planned on the Ecklund Road this year.

**Facilities:** Sewer repairs were done to the old Newberry Field Office.

**Good Neighbor Authority:** There are two active GNA timber sales on the Hiawatha east zone.

### **Land Use**

- Newberry issued a land use event permit for a prayer service at Whitefish Point. Reviewing other permit applications received as well as easement requests. Received several inquiries about road maintenance and reports of washed-out roads.
- Fiber requests in the Shingleton area have slowed down. There are also requests coming in for right of way work and road access.
- Sault Ste. Marie issued several research permits and completed a permit for Three Shores CISMA to spray invasive species on state land. Several trespass cases are working towards a resolution.

### **Forest Health**

- The EUP has been fairly quiet from a forest health standpoint.
- Increased staffing levels have improved our capacity for forest health survey, detection and management efforts. Two forest health foresters will be covering on-the-ground efforts in the EUP.
- Additional red pine mortality pockets detected during aerial survey efforts were evaluated by staff. Native bark beetle infestations and Armillaria root rot were detected. It appears trees had become stressed in lower, wetter areas of stands.

### **Commercial Forest**

- District Service Forester
  - Reviewing forest management plans.
  - Field work for new commercial forest enrollments.
  - Working with the conservation easement (CE) specialist to monitor the Manulife CE.
  - Monitoring commercial forest lands for compliance.

### **Training**

- 1 Newberry staff completed S-204.
- Three staff completed Michigan Firefighters Training Council (MFFTC) emergency driving class.

- Fire supervisor in the Sault completed train-the-trainer for MFFTC Emergency Driving and now is a certified instructor for the course.
- Forester in Naubinway successfully obtained his Class A CDL.
- Fire staff assisted the USFS with instructing a field day for the LSSU students to complete their basic wildfire training.
- Forestry staff met with procurement foresters from local hardwood mills to discuss hardwood cruising and to build a better understanding of how they are grading standing timber.

#### ***Vacancies/New Hires***

- The Newberry forest technician is vacant again after the departure of the most recently hired employee.
- Two student forestry interns have started in the Newberry Unit.
- The GNA forester position in Shingleton has been filled by Anthoney Ciaramitaro, a Forester from the Newberry Unit.
- Shingleton fire supervisor interviews were held on May 27, and the position should be announced soon.
- The three non-career forest fire officer positions in the East UP went unfilled. Two offers were made but not accepted due to housing shortages and competing job offers.

### **Fisheries Division-Eastern UP – Cory Kovacs, Fisheries Biologist**

#### **Field Management Update**

1. Creel clerks started their season at several eastern Upper Peninsula ports, including Cedarville/Hessel, and St. Ignace (including Carp River and Pine River).
2. The Michigan Sea Grant Spring Workshop was held on April 29 in Cedarville (and virtually) with topics including updates on the fish community of the Les Cheneaux Islands area and cormorant control.
3. In April and May, the Newberry fisheries crew conducted walleye adult abundance estimates on South Manistique Lake (Mackinac) and Pike Lake (Luce). Weather cooperated this spring and the crew is confident the surveys were successful to make good estimates. For the South Manistique Lake estimate, the crew marked 1,465 walleye and recaptured 80 during the recapture effort. For the Pike Lake estimate, the crew marked 214 walleye and recaptured 36 during the recapture effort. Calculated abundance estimates for South Manistique Lake and Pike Lake were 0.9 and 1.8 adult walleye per acre, respectively.
4. The DNR Tribal Coordination Unit from Marquette conducted a walleye adult abundance estimate on Teal Lake (Marquette). The crews used electrofishing to mark and recapture walleye during the survey. The crew marked 560 walleye and captured 196 walleye during the recapture effort. A calculated abundance estimate for Teal Lake was 1.8 adult walleye per acre.
5. The Newberry fisheries crew conducted a spring netting assessment on Shelldrake Flooding (Chippewa) for northern pike to collect aging structures (fin rays) for age and growth analysis.
6. The Newberry fisheries crew conducted Status and Trends surveys on Monocle Lake (Chippewa), and Stanley Lake (Schoolcraft).
7. In May, Teal Lake (Marquette) received 950,000 walleye fry and South Manistique Lake (Mackinac) received 400,000 walleye fry. Thompson State Fish Hatchery staff delivered the fry to these inland lakes as well as 200,000 to the rearing pond operated by the Newberry fisheries crew.
8. Sucker River H-58 replacement project began June 2. Road closure signs will be posted along the detour route. Project construction is expected to last 12–15 weeks. This project is a collaboration between the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Michigan DNR, Superior Watershed Partnership, and Alger County Road Commission.
9. The Newberry fisheries crew assisted Fish Production staff with brook trout stocking in Luce County lakes.
10. Temperature loggers are being deployed to support summer stream work and Status and Trends long-term monitoring.
11. Newberry fisheries staff participated in the Salmon in the Classroom release for Saint Ignace Schools at the mouth of the Carp River (Mackinac). This is the second year of the program in Saint Ignace. The equipment and support for the program was furnished entirely by Fred Waara Chapter of Trout Unlimited.
12. Tentative plans are being made to draw down the impoundment at Kings Pond (Schoolcraft) to replace the water control riser stoplogs during June-August. The pond would be restocked with brook trout after refilling in the early fall if the dam and water control structures pass inspections.
13. Additional land parcels are being purchased by DNR to facilitate the construction of a new sea lamprey barrier on the lower Manistique River that will replace the current dam that is in poor condition. The current schedule has construction starting during the summer of 2026.
14. Escanaba fisheries staff have been working closely with constituents from Big Manistique Lake and Brevoort Lake to control cormorants that have been migrating through the eastern UP during mid-May. USDA-Wildlife Services has also been conducting control activities on each lake.

#### Fish Production Section Update

1. Thompson State Fish Hatchery completed their trout and salmon stocking this spring. A total of 486,000 steelhead and 490,000 Chinook salmon were produced and stocked out.
2. Two walleye egg takes were performed in April on Little Bay de Noc. These activities yielded 3,780,000 that went to rearing ponds or directly to public water bodies in May.
3. Thompson State Fish Hatchery staff moved young steelhead into rearing tanks and are looking good so far.
4. Five hatchery rearing ponds have walleye fry in them. They will be emptied before July, with those fingerlings to be stocked in Upper Peninsula waters.
5. One rearing pond at Thompson State Fish Hatchery still has muskellunge that were held over winter. The intent was to gain additional growth on them as yearlings. These yearlings are slated to go into broodstock lakes in lower Michigan (Thornapple and Hudson lakes) on June 11. The hope is that they contribute to the population size and genetic variability in those lakes for Fisheries Division to eventually utilize for eggs.
6. Thompson State Fish Hatchery staff member assisted with ice storm damage cleanup at Oden State Fish Hatchery.
7. Marquette State Fish Hatchery has moved all production fry (trout and splake) to tanks and will be reared until their release next spring. Conditions look good for these fish, and they should be able to fill their rearing assignments.
8. Marquette State Fish Hatchery has wrapped up their spring stocking season after stocking out 120,000 lake trout, 70,000 brook trout, and 190,000 splake.
9. Three Arctic Grayling egg takes were held in late April/early May resulting in around 800,000 eggs being transferred to our tribal partners to be placed in remote streamside incubators in the Maple, Boardman and Manistee rivers.
10. Marquette State Fish Hatchery has a construction project scheduled for start on June 23 to replace their brood isolation building and update the HVAC system for the main hatchery. Because of this, the hatchery will be closed to the public until the project is completed in early October.
11. Marquette hatchery staff is once again fully staffed after recent employee retirements, promotions, and departures.

#### Fisheries Research Section Update

1. The RV Lake Char research crew wrapping up spring lake trout survey on Lake Superior week of June 2.
2. The RV Lake Char research crew will be sampling at Big Reef starting June 9 and go through June 20 assuming weather cooperates.
3. On May 22, the Isle Royale National Park creel survey crew arrived safely at the park. The official creel survey of Isle Royale nearshore waters began on June 1<sup>st</sup> with three creel clerks. Marquette research, Statewide Angler Survey Program, and National Park Service staff worked to secure logistics and design this creel survey. The creel will run through this fall.
4. Marquette Research crew along with US Fish and Wildlife Service and Kris Nault of the Lake Superior Management Unit, sampled 76 lake sturgeon during spawning run in Sturgeon River and collected eggs to stock St. Louis River (MN/WI).
5. Since April 1, passive integrated transponder (PIT) tag antennas in Cedar and Whitefish rivers have detected ~80 stocked lake sturgeon returning as adults.
6. Research crews completed walleye tagging on Little Bay de Noc with ~700 fish jaw tagged, and 140 walleyes tagged with acoustic tags.

#### **Marketing & Outreach Division: Jon Spieles, Chief**

- *Statewide Programming at Visitor Centers Since October 1:* Attendance 45,000 and 490 K-12 Programs presented for 22,845 students (in addition to Nature Awaits participation listed below).
- *Visitor Center Renovations:* State Park visitor centers at the Porcupine Mountains, Waterloo and Hoffmaster are currently closed for renovations.
- *Flint State Park Nature-Based Education:* The division is working with Genesee County to provide education programming at Flint State Park.
- *Nature Awaits:* 25,000+ students participated/enrolled in 2025 field trips running through early June. 70 classrooms, and 1,970 students, are already signed up for next fall's Nature Awaits field trips.
- *Explorer Program:* Explorer training was completed the week of May 18-22. We have 30 guides working in parks this year and 26 of them were able to attend training. Parks and schedules for 2025 are here:  
<https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/education/public/nature-programs/nature-program-schedules>.
- *Salmon in the Classroom:* Over 300 teachers released fish across the state in 2024-2025, estimating over 30,000 fish. Program Coordinator, Tracy Page has been onsite for 33 classroom releases from Baroda (near IN border) to Columbus



(near Port Huron) to Muskegon to Marquette. The 2025-2026 application period for the 2025/2026 school year closed April 15. 50 good applications were received. 30 new teachers are tentatively accepted, pending workshop attendance in November.

- *Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW):* Beyond BOW Turkey Basic Hunting Info and Hunt (May 15-16) in Cass City; Summer BOW at RAM (June 20-22) filled with 60 participants in 3 days.
- *Range Activities:* Recent bids for two projects came in well over budget and currently working on issuing post-bid addendum with reduced scope. Work at Echo Point underway to restore berms, replace ADA paths with concrete and realign perimeter fencing. Barry range is open as a newly staffed range. Marquette Range open for the season on April 29. Kickoff meeting held for design phase of archery range at Waterloo Recreation Area in partnership with MUCC.
- *Range Funding/Staffing:* Early submission of development of operation and development grant applications for FY26 is a priority as approval processes have slowed throughout the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Several staff remained on extended medical leave through May. WOC supervisor in place for range staff. Section Manager is filling in for NASP and Community Archery programs.
- *Social Media:*
  - Fishing and other advertising campaigns are currently running on Meta and Pinterest social media platforms. These include nonresident angler and female angler campaigns and convention and visitors' bureau campaigns encouraging people to visit Michigan locations for fishing and trail opportunities. Click-through rates have been exceptional, with some ads performing two to three times better than standard expectations for social media ads.
  - Several community and Department of Natural Resources events have been highlighted recently on DNR social media platforms. These include a live video from a community event in Muskegon, coverage of the Arctic grayling ceremony at the Oden State Fish Hatchery and a Salmon in the Classroom release in Baroda featuring the Lt. Governor.
  - Content on Instagram has been resonating with new audiences by exploring wildlife and educating viewers about Michigan species. One example is a feature on beavers and similar animals. Content designed to appeal to non-followers continues to grow the DNR's Instagram channel, which has surpassed 110,000 followers – making us the most followed (main DNR account) and second most followed (state parks account) accounts among State of Michigan agencies.
- *Website Updates:* The new Recreation Search will go live on June 2. The MOD team is working on getting it ready so that it will be included in the first wave of chatbot testing for SOM websites, which kicks off soon after that. Being in wave 1 for testing allows us more time to work through the process on all the DNR sites.
- *Division Assisting with the Ice Storm:* The Marketing Section continues to play an active role on the DNR unified command ice storm response team. Serving as public information officers, communications and marketing experts, graphic designers, photographers, video producers, social media experts, and writers and editors, we have been providing our assistance since the storm hit at the end of March. We will continue to assist as needed to help keep Michigan residents and visitors informed about DNR storm response efforts and storm-related closures and safety concerns.
- *License Sales System:* MOD has been meeting with our vendor Paylt on DNR Hunt and Fish App improvements including new map features and improvements to the digital kill tag process. Paylt is also working to modify point of sale software.

### **Law Enforcement Division (LED): Lt. Skip Hagy, Eastern UP (District 2)**

- Officers are transitioning into summer recreational activities and are busy with enforcing ORV and Boating laws. Officers are also busy with burn ban complaints due to the extremely dry spring.
- The 26-week long Conservation Officer Academy 13 which began on January 5 is going well with a graduation set for July 3. We will be receiving new officers from this academy in Luce, Mackinac, and Delta counties.
- ***Lt. Hagy has retired after 35 years of service with LED, and we wish him the best in his next adventures!***

### **DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 4-14-2025**

- **CO Andrea Dani** swore to a misdemeanor complaint from muzzleloader season in which the Alger County Prosecutor authorized charges including attempt to take deer with crossbow during late archery season in the UP, attempt to take deer outside of lawful hunting hours, and fail to report a deer harvest within 72 hours. The subject was mailed a summons by the court and the matter is pending.
- **CO Steve Butzin** was on patrol when several calls went out for motorists stranded in ditches or motorists that had crashed their vehicle in Delta County during a significant ice storm. CO Butzin assisted local units in recovering these vehicles and completing traffic crash reports.

- **CO Steve Butzin** gave a presentation at a local hunter safety class on rules and regulations pertaining to hunting, shared stories on what a Conservation Officer does, and answered many questions from students in the class.
- **CO Scott Pankow and Sgt. Calvin Smith** checked a couple of fishermen trying their luck on a river near Lake Superior. Only one of the fishermen could produce a valid 2025 fishing license. The other individual was cited for fail to display fishing license.
- **CO Scott Pankow** received a tip that an individual was fishing on a bay in Mackinac County when they had already caught their limit of perch in the morning and was currently out again with another person catching and keeping more perch. CO Pankow and **Cpl. Todd Sumbera** contacted two individuals coming off the ice. The individual admitted to catching their limit in the morning along with 20 perch and two bluegills in the evening. The second individual did not have a 2025 fishing license and had 11 fish in their possession. The individual advised they had 400 to 450 perch fillets in their freezer at home and gave CO Pankow and Cpl. Sumbera permission to look in their freezer at their residence. As they were getting ready to follow them to their residence, CO Pankow noticed the individual call someone. CO Pankow then contacted an officer from Sault Police Department to sit on the residence to make sure someone does not go there and pull the fish out of the freezer. While enroute to the residence, CO Pankow was advised from the Sault PD Officer, that when he arrived there was an individual at the fisherman's residence loading the back of his truck with a large number of frozen perch. Upon arrival, CO Pankow and Cpl. Sumbera seized an additional 444 Perch fillets (222 Perch) from the subject's freezer. A report was completed and submitted to the Chippewa County Prosecutor's Office requesting charges for fishing without a license, over possession of perch, and for tampering with evidence.
- **CO Scott Pankow** was on patrol and noticed two dirt bikes operating on M-48. CO Pankow initiated a traffic stop on the two dirt bikes. Neither bike had a valid 2025 ORV license on them. CO Pankow gave them warnings for operating on the highway and cited them both for fail to display ORV license.
- **CO Justin Vinson** was on patrol when he observed a vehicle that had gone off the roadway. CO Vinson assisted the driver with contacting a towing service to remove the vehicle from the ditch and provided them with an accident report.
- **CO Mike Olesen** observed an individual operating an ATV on a County Road who wasn't wearing a helmet and had also failed to license the ATV. CO Olesen conducted a traffic stop and recognized the individual as he had given him a verbal warning for the same violation in the past. A citation was issued for operating an ATV without a helmet.

#### **DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 4-28-2025**

- **CO Robert Freeborn** was advised by local dispatch of a domestic assault in progress. CO Freeborn was very close to the location and was first on scene. The subjects were already separated by the time CO Freeborn arrived. It was found that no assault had taken place and that it was only a verbal dispute. Both subjects agreed to go their separate ways for the day to prevent more arguing.
- **CO Robert Freeborn** located 2 juvenile subjects fishing a closed trout stream. CO Freeborn educated the young fisherman on the season dates of that particular river. The juveniles had several questions pertaining to fishing in the area that CO Freeborn answered.
- **CO Robert Freeborn** received a call from local dispatch about subjects who had followed their GPS on an unplowed 2-track and became stuck in their car. After receiving a potential GPS coordinate of their location, CO Freeborn began to search for them. After driving his patrol truck as far as he could on the 2-track, CO Freeborn began walking on foot and eventually located the stuck subjects. CO Freeborn directed a tracked tow vehicle to the location to recover the stuck vehicle. All subjects made it out without incident and were educated on relying on GPS in this area.
- **CO Brandon Maki** was checking a section of the Rock River which was closed for spawning steelhead. While checking the river CO Maki observed a subject fishing within the closed area. CO Maki took enforcement action and seized the fisherman's fish which was caught in the closed section of the stream.
- **CO Brandon Maki** received a complaint of juveniles attempting to net fish in the closed portion of the Rock River. CO Maki responded and contacted juveniles that matched the description given in the complaint educating them the river is closed in a specific section for spawning purposes. After concluding this contact CO Maki observed a fisherman actively fishing in the closed section of the stream, contacted him, and took enforcement action before clearing the scene.
- **CO Scott Pankow** was on patrol on M-48 when he observed two dirt bikes traveling southbound on the edge of the highway. CO Pankow turned around and initiated a traffic stop and observed neither bike had a valid ORV registration sticker. CO Pankow cited both operators for failing to display ORV registrations and gave them both warnings for operating ORVs on a public highway.
- **CO Mike Olesen** patrolled Chippewa County streams and rivers for smelt dipping activity. CO Olesen came in contact with a large number of anglers throughout the night patrol. All those checked had their 2025 fishing license and were within regulations.
- **CO Cole VanOosten** was on patrol of a closed trout stream in Mackinac County when he encountered an older couple sitting on the riverbank. Upon contact, CO VanOosten determined that they were attempting to smelt dip. The couple stated that the river was where they had dipped smelt over 35 years prior and that they had just moved back to Michigan and wanted to try it again. CO VanOosten informed the couple that smelt hadn't ran up the river in decades and that it was now an area closed to fishing. CO VanOosten gave the couple information on where to successfully and legally dip smelt in the area and a warning was issued for fishing a closed stream.
- **CO Cole VanOosten** was on patrol of Mackinac County when he observed two individuals actively spearing in a trout stream. CO VanOosten contacted the anglers and advised them that it was illegal to be spearing in a trout stream. It was also determined that neither individual had a valid fishing license. Citations were issued for possessing a spear on a trout stream and fishing without a license. The spears were seized as evidence in the case.
- **COs Justin Vinson and Cole VanOosten** assisted with the 69<sup>th</sup> annual Newberry kids tackle party. The COs as well as members from Fisheries Division assisted in a fishing game that teaches kids how to cast. The tackle party provided fishing equipment to 305 kids in the Newberry and surrounding area.

#### **DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 5-12-2025**

- **CO Andrea Dani** observed two anglers fishing in the section of the Rock River closed to fishing for spawning. The pair admitted they caught and killed three steelhead in the closed section. CO Dani cited both individuals for fishing the closed stream and seized and donated the illegally caught fish.
- **COs Andrea Dani and Brandon Maki** received a complaint about a deer on an iceberg on Lake Superior near Munising. It was reported the deer had been on that iceberg for over 8 hours. COs responded to the scene where they found a lethargic looking doe standing on the ice. CO Maki jumped from iceberg to iceberg and eventually waded through the water to get to the deer. CO Maki got close and was able to persuade the deer to head back to shore.

- **CO Brandon Maki** was on a fish patrol at the Rock River when he observed two fishermen making their way back towards their vehicle. While on their walk back, one of them chose to fish in the closed section of the river. CO Maki confronted the fisherman and informed him of this specific section of river being closed. CO Maki took enforcement action before clearing the scene.
- **COs Robert Freeborn and Steven Butzin** assisted **Cpl. Mike Hammill** in an illegal subsistence netting operation. After hours of surveillance, the suspects were located. The tribal fisherman had close to 300 pounds of walleye over their limit. The walleye was seized and turned over to the tribe by Cpl. Mike Hammill who also issued citations for the incident.
- **CO Justin Vinson** was patrolling in Luce County when he was flagged down in the town of Newberry. The individuals provided CO Vinson with information about a fox stuck in a foothold trap just north of Newberry. CO Vinson responded to the complaint. With trapping season well past for both fox and coyote the fox was released, and the trap was seized. An interview of the suspect was conducted. A report was compiled and submitted to the Luce County prosecutor.
- **CO Mike Olesen** responded to a wildfire in Mackinac County. CO Olesen was met by local and DNR fire on scene. The fire was caused by the burning of brush that got out of control. The individual who had started the fire was cited into the Mackinac County court for prosecution for burning during active burn restrictions.
- Upon leaving the scene of the fire, **CO Mike Olesen** came across another active open burn during his patrol. CO Olesen approached the residence and observed the fire. It took approximately 15 minutes to contact the owner who was in his residence and not actively attending to the fire or a fishing line he had in a river adjacent to his property. Upon contacting the homeowner, CO Olesen cited the individual for burning during an active burn ban and leaving a fishing line unattended. Other violations noted were fishing without a valid 2025 fishing license and not attending to an active fire.
- **CO Scott Pankow** conducted a hunter safety class in Chippewa County where 15 individuals received their hunter safety certificates. CO Pankow noted the lowest score was 96%.
- **CO Cole VanOosten** received a complaint of a camper occupying a state forest campground without paying. CO VanOosten contacted the camper who admitted to non-payment for 4 days. A citation was issued to the man for camping without paying at a State Forest Campground.
- **CO Cole VanOosten** attended a sentencing hearing for a man that was arrested for numerous thefts of State Forest Campground pay pipes during the summer of 2023 and 2024. The man pled guilty to the charges of larceny between \$1000 and \$20,000 as well as operating on a suspended, revoked license. The man was sentenced to a year in jail with credit for 81 days served. A restitution hearing was scheduled for 30 days to determine total restitution owed to the State of Michigan.

#### **DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 5-26-2025**

- **CO Brandon Maki** was on patrol when he observed an individual fishing on a stream near a bridge. CO Maki observed this fisherman and another nearly under the bridge fishing for some time. CO Maki checked the original fisherman's license, and the second fisherman then made his way over without his fishing rod. When asked about fishing, he stated he had not been fishing. CO Maki informed him that was not the truth and found his fishing rod nearby with a spinner still in the water. CO Maki cited the subject for the violation.
- **CO Brandon Maki** was on patrol in Grand Marais when he observed what appeared to be a passenger car plate on a pick-up truck. CO Maki ran the plate, and it came back registered as a SUV. CO Maki initiated a traffic stop on the vehicle. The operator stated that he had swapped the plates several months ago and he knew he wasn't allowed to do so. CO Maki took enforcement action before clearing the traffic stop.
- **CO Steve Butzin** assisted Menominee County Sheriff's deputies in the search for a subject who led deputies on a high-speed chase before abandoning the vehicle and fleeing the scene on foot, warrants being sought by Sheriff's deputies.
- **CO Scott Pankow** conducted a patrol on the St. Mary's River during which he came across boat with an individual from Canada fishing behind the Cloverland Power plant. The subject immediately asked if he needed a Michigan fishing license because he had one from Canada but had not purchased a Michigan fishing license. A citation was issued for the violation.
- **CO Scott Pankow** observed an individual in a kayak on the St. Mary's River without a PFD (Personal Floatation Device). CO Pankow contacted the individual and cited them for no PFD on kayak.
- **CO Scott Pankow** patrolled around Drummond Island area for the Walleye opener and checked an individual without a fishing license. CO Pankow cited the individual for fish no license.
- **CO Scott Pankow and Cpl. Cole Vanoosten** initiated a traffic stop on M-28 west of Newberry of a truck pulling a boat without any trailer lights. CO Pankow checked the fish they caught and located a short walleye. The individual was cited for possessing an undersized walleye.
- **CO Scott Pankow and Lt. Skip Hagy** worked an ORV Patrol on Drummond Island and the Detour area during Memorial weekend. CO Pankow and Lt. Hagy cited multiple ORV'S/UTV's for on highway operation, no seat belts, no ORV registrations, and allow <12 year old to operate without supervision. CO Pankow and Lt. Hagy also cited an individual for failing to move over for stationary emergency vehicle and no proof of insurance when suspect driver/vehicle came within a few feet of CO Pankow and the driver of the vehicle they were on a traffic stop with. The driver also proceeded to blow the horn as she passed close by. This took place on a straight stretch of highway with no other traffic present, once stopped the driver offered no reason other than they were standing in the road, suspect was a resident of Jamacia here on a work Visa. CO Pankow and Lt. Hagy also cited an individual for possessing a short bass. Along with the 15 tickets issued during the patrol numerous verbal warnings were also given.
- **CO Mike Olesen** attended a marine safety presentation to assist in explaining proper safety techniques and state laws that apply to the sport.
- **CO Mike Olesen** hosted a hunter education course along with a field day for 36 individuals. CO Olesen was able to access the Chippewa County Shooting Association for the field day due to volunteers from the association.

#### **Wildlife Division: Dave Lemmien, Northern Michigan Regional Manager & Karen Section, Field Operations Manager, Eastern UP**

- *2025 DHIPI Grants Awarded*
  - For the 2025 fiscal grant season, there were 14 applications, and 14 new projects were approved. The total requested was \$140,871.10. This year, additional Deer Range Improvement Program (DRIP) funds were available and that enabled Wildlife Division to fully fund the 14 projects that scored sufficiently to warrant grant awards. In total, this

year grant expenditures of \$148,306.10 will be authorized (including a carryover grant project #15 with Ruffed Grouse Society from the 2024 season).

- This is the 17<sup>th</sup> year of the DHIPI grant program. Including this year's crop of grants, the Wildlife Division will have awarded 162 grants totaling \$1,288,244 in DRIP funds. Participating partners have contributed \$953,701.75 in match to all these projects, thereby expanding the scope and scale of their positive habitat and community effects.
- The purpose of this initiative is to develop a collaborative approach to deer habitat improvement on private landownership across the Upper Peninsula. There are three primary goals for this initiative. All projects should address these fundamental goals to be considered for funding:
  - Produce on-the-ground deer habitat (summer and/or winter range) improvements in the Upper Peninsula that address resource needs.
  - Establish and promote partnerships between the DNR, sportsmen's organizations, and other partners.
  - Showcase these cooperative projects through a coordinated public outreach effort, highlighting the relationship between the DNR and Partners while educating the public on the benefits of habitat improvements made through the grant.
- Initiative funding is from an annual Deer Range Improvement Program (DRIP) fund appropriation. Public Act 106 of 1971 created the DRIP fund, whereby \$1.50 from every deer hunting license sold statewide is allocated into a restricted fund to be exclusively used for the improvement and maintenance of habitat for deer, acquisition of land for deer management, and the payment in lieu of taxes on purchased lands.
- This year, projects are located in Iron, Baraga, Gogebic, Ontonagon, Marquette, Delta, Alger, Mackinac and Dickinson counties. Five are with conservation districts, eight are with sportsperson clubs and one is with a school district working on enhancing school forest properties. The projects range from traditional wildlife opening creations to hunter walking trail maintenance and establishment, tree plantings (i.e., hard mast, soft mast, conifers, and wildlife benefiting shrubs). Minimally, 756 acres of treatments are proposed with the final numbers expected to be significantly higher. Grant contracts are being released right now and once all paperwork is completed a final listing of grant awards will be made available.
- Projects Within the EUPCAC Area
  1. Straits Area Sportsmen's Club: The Straits Area Sportsmen's Club (SASC) has been approved for \$15,000 for a project to continue to partner with the US Forest Service St. Ignace Ranger District to improve two forest openings totaling 13 acres in the Les Cheneaux Deer Wintering Complex in Mackinac County by woody encroachment and enhance cool season grasses and forbs to serve as deer forage opportunities. The second part of the project proposes planting soft mass fruiting shrubs (hawthorn) in wildlife openings to provide improved foraging opportunities for deer, ruffed grouse and associated wildlife species. Both projects are in the St. Ignace Ranger District Hiawatha National Forest. These areas are accessible to the public for hunting. The mechanical opening maintenance prescription will set back encroachment of woody seedlings/saplings via mastication or forestry mulcher. SASC will provide \$2,500 to purchase soft mass native fruiting shrubs (i.e., hawthorn) along with any funds remaining from this grant. Fruiting shrubs will be planted along the perimeter of wildlife openings and protected by plastic tubes or similar material as protection from browsing. This project will benefit deer, turkeys, bears, grouse and other wildlife species.
  2. U.P. Whitetails Association Inc. "Break UP Green Project" with Cannon Forestry: The DNR has approved \$8,127 for the "Break UP Green Deer Garden" habitat improvement project in Delta County owned by Shaw Cannon. U.P. Whitetails Association Inc. (UPWTA) Al Ettenhofer has sponsored this project. The property is in Delta County and is 160 acres in size. The proposal is to treat four sites totaling five acres within the Whitefish River deer wintering complex (DWC). Sites will be disced, seeded, fertilized, and planted with a mix of oats, white ladino clover, red clover, alfalfa, and chicory. Chicory is a good plant to inter-plant along with clovers as it has a long tap root system and holds strong during very hot dry conditions during summer months. Adjacent landowners are non-industrial private and Hiawatha National Forest.
  3. Alger Conservation District: The DNR has approved \$11,673.67 for the Alger County Deer Habitat Initiative Project in Alger County. Deer habitat improvements to these private land properties will focus on converting existing forest trails into wildlife corridors that supply a hearty quantity of herbaceous foods, soft mast fruits, and hard mast acorns to prepare wintering deer herds for the season and provide for early spring diet. Alger

Conservation District (ACD) staff will work with landowners and contactors during site preparation, tree planting, wildlife openings, seedings and sign installation.

The ACD project involves two project sites. Site 1 is in Alger County and involves 70 acres of ownership. Site 1 is to be treated by enhancing a wildlife corridor by planting various species of trees and shrubs as well as three acres of treated wildlife opening. The mix of species to be included are northern hardwood deciduous species, conifer species, and lowland fruiting shrubs. Forest trails on the site that function as wildlife movement corridors will be treated to prepare a proper seedbed planted to wildlife mix.

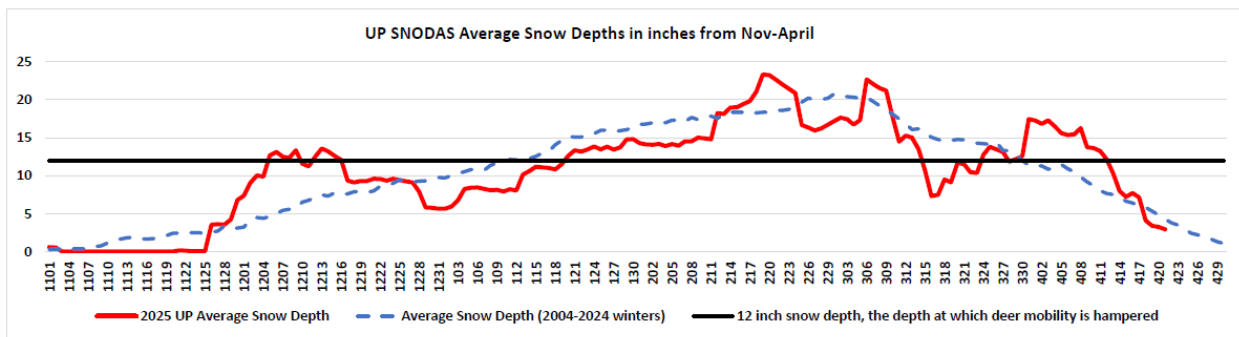
Site 2 is also in Alger County. Site 2 involves treating an area of 20 acres by planting trails into wildlife corridors paired with tree and shrub plantings as well. The estimated overall acreage of seed coverage between the trail and food plots will be approximately two acres.

Soils tests will determine appropriate soil amendments and fertilizer rates. Planting mixes will avoid invasive or non-naturalized species. Clover mixes, cool season mixes, native pollinator mixes or other species mixes that can persist for several growing seasons with minimal maintenance (i.e., annual mowing) or additional treatments are to be used. Chemical preparation may be necessary to adequately prepare the seedbed and remove undesirable species.

4. Burt Township Schools/ Alger Conservation District: The DNR has approved \$10,673.67 for the "School Forest Habitat Improvement Project in Alger County (T49N, R13W Section 2). The project was authored by a Burt Township student and Alger Conservation District (ACD) will administer the project. Burt Township Schools superintendent and principal will coordinate implementation of the project between ACD and the student author. The author will be heavily involved in all aspects of the planning, coordination, implementation, documentation, reporting and publicity of the project. This project aims to improve deer habitat conditions in approximately 600 acres of school forest. Work will involve the planting of a variety of native trees and shrubs to provide cover and food sources, create bedding areas, and establish high nutritional value food plots. The project will focus on tree planting to bolster forest diversity and improve hard and soft mast production. For the tree planting portion of the project, the following species will be planted: cedar, wild plum, white oak, red osier dogwood, black cherry, crab and other varieties of apples and fruit trees, red oak, hazelnut, and chestnut.

- The DHIPI selection committee is composed of Bill Scullon (FOM and DHIPI program Administrator), Don Brown (Shingleton Wildlife Biologist), John Pepin (UP Deputy Public Information Officer) and Jason Caron (UP Service Forester). Don, John, and Jason are recognized for their diligence in reviewing all the applications and helping to shape the outcomes of each grant so partners can be successful.

- *Wildlife Division Contributing to Northern Lower Peninsula (NLP) Ice Storm Damage Response*: The forest damage caused by the ice storm in the NLP has been massive. Department resources from all over the state have been leveraged to help with the cleanup. The Wildlife Division has sent equipment and personnel from across the UP to assist. Efforts have been focused on opening access within the NLP state forest where roads and trails were impassable. The concentrated effort has lessened at the end of May, but the cleanup effort will continue for years to come.
- *Habitat Work Preparations Continue*: Despite the delayed spring break up in many locations and the ice storm in the NLP, WLD staff continue to prepare for the spring / summer planting season. They are busily finalizing seed contracts, ordering trees, preparing equipment and finalizing plans for a wide variety of habitat improvement projects across the UP. Spring prescribed fire plans were recently paused as many FRD fire staff and staff from other divisions were redirected in the short term to help in the NLP. Wildfire response planning and staffing remains the same. However, prescribed burns will be delayed, and we will be looking at summer and fall opportunities to conduct those burns we have planned. In the UP for the first time most of our staff are wildland and prescribed fire qualified. This adds capacity to our department burn program and helps to keep cost down and enable us to normally accomplish more habitat burns as well as bolster wildfire response.
- *Winter Severity Impact on Wildlife*: The 2024-25 winter has come to an end. The duration of "deep" snow week for the winter is 83 days of snow depths of >12 inches and the long-term average duration of 78 days. Wildlife staff continue to monitor winter weather impacts. Dave Jentoft and Caleb Eckloff run the SNODAS modeling which tracks snow coverage and duration across the whole UP using NAOO data. Snow level of 12 inches in combination with duration of more than 90 days is something we watch closely as this will push winter into a severe category. We ended the winter below the 90-day threshold for what we would characterize as a severe winter.



- **Bat/White Nose Syndrome (WNS) Update (from John DePue):** Based on underground bat survey work, population declines have stabilized and are starting to slowly increase from historic lows due to WNS. Even though some hibernacula are seeing increases, bats are still dying from the disease. We continue to work on a joint project with MTU to identify ideal hibernation conditions for bats to mitigate the impacts of WNS in Michigan. It has been a cold spring, but bats are now starting to emerge from hibernation and move across the landscape looking for insects (although few insects are present at the time of this writing) and summer roosting locations.
- **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI):** HPAI cases are now confirmed in domestic birds, wild birds, and wild mammals throughout most of North America. Since late February 2022, Michigan has experienced die-offs in wild birds and mammals across the state due to HPAI. Monitoring of sick and dead wildlife for HPAI continues and the disease is considered widespread and endemic across Michigan and North America. The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development continues to take swift action in response to this disease and is closely monitoring and responding to reports of sick domestic birds and HPAI throughout the state. HPAI has caused extensive illness and death in a range of wild bird species across North America. In particular, waterfowl, raptors, scavengers, gulls and terns have been affected. The DNR is focusing its surveillance efforts by prioritizing testing dead birds from die-offs of six or more birds, as well as bald eagles, and abnormal acting hawks, owls, and wild mammals. Please visit the HPAI section within the MIDNR website including the Frequently Asked Questions portion. <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/managing-resources/wildlife/wildlife-disease/disease-monitoring/avian-influenza-updates>.

## Parks & Recreation Division-Eastern UP Trails: PJ Costa-Eastern UP Trails

Project Name: Trail 8 – 3 Bridges	Project Name: Haywire Grade – 11 Bridges
Description: Engineer and replace 3 bridges	Description: Engineer and replace 11 bridges
Trail Use: Snowmobile	Trail Use: ORV/Snowmobile
Anticipated Completion: 2025	Anticipated Completion: TBD
6/25 Update: The project will start mid-June and should take two weeks to finish.	6/25 Update: Site visit scheduled for early June to do individual designs for the 10 bridges to be redecked at the USFS request. USFS low on staff and unable to get these crossings through the approval process this year.
Project Name: Grass Creek Bridge Snow Trail #8	Project Name: Betsy River Bridge Snow Trail #452
Description: Bridge failing on the Sunrise grade. Design and replacement needed.	Description: Large bridge failing north of Paradise. Design and replacement needed.
Trail Use: Snowmobile	Trail Use: Snowmobile
Anticipated Completion: TBD	Anticipated Completion: TBD
6/25 Update: Waiting on funding.	6/25 Update: Waiting on funding.
Project Name: Sunrise Grade Snow Trail #8 LFRHW Crossing	Project Name: Trail #49 – 12 Mile/Gaines Hwy
Description: Failing bridge on Snow Trail #8. Design, engineering and construction needed to replace	Description: 4.2 miles of roadbed and a failed bridge. Design, engineering and construction needed to build up roadbed and replace the crossing.
Trail Use: Snowmobile	Trail Use: Snowmobile
Anticipated Completion: TBD	Anticipated Completion: TBD

6/25 Update: Funding needed.

6/25 Update: Cost of converting this to an ORV route also is too high with wetland mitigation. Project will be tabled until a more cost-effective option becomes available. Club will maintain the trail as best as possible for now.

## **Parks & Recreation Division (PRD): Eric Cowing, Eastern UP District Supervisor**

### ***Brimley State Park/Detour Harbor/Lime Island***

- Brimley Utility Improvement (waterline/storm water replacement): Substantial completion pushed back to June 17, due to slow progress.
- DeTour Harbor Surge Protection System Improvements: Substantial completion delayed due to availability of certain electrical components.
- Lime Island Solar System Replacement/Upgrade: Substantial completion scheduled for June 13, 2025.
- A conditional offer for a vacant seasonal ranger position was made to a candidate for DeTour State Harbor & Lime Island Recreation Area. Waiting for approval for final offer.
- Seasonal State Park Workers-DeTour is fully staffed for the season, while Brimley needs to fill a couple more positions.
- Brimley: Has been closed to pedestrian and vehicular traffic since September 3, 2024, to accommodate construction. Park is scheduled to open on June 19.
- DeTour State Harbor: Some seasonal slip holders have shown up, but harbor is not accepting reservations until final electrical inspection is completed.
- Lime Island Recreation Area: Will open for the season on June 15.
- State forest campgrounds have been seeing normal use for this time of year.
- Park staff have been busy getting our facilities ready for opening.
- Brimley and DeTour rangers assisted with the lower peninsula storm cleanup the week of May 26.
- Brimley supervisor has been busy keeping on top of three different capital outlay projects at three different locations.
- Brimley State Park held their summer worker orientation/training day June 4-5.

### ***Fayette Historic State Park***

- Finishing up siding on Townhall in historic townsite.
- Re-painted building number 7 in historic townsite.
- Visitor center ADA upgrades still ongoing and hope to be re-opened June 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Campground camp host site upgraded.
- Site prep for new gaming area in campground.
- Final dirt work completed for park drain fields.
- Summer staff hired and most started for the season.
- Memorial Day weekend camping was about the same as the previous year. The weather was little on the cold side.

### ***Indian Lake State Park & Palms Book State Park***

- Indian Lake State Park new toilet shower building has a pre-bid meeting scheduled for June 17.
- DNR, DTMB, and EGLE had an on-site meeting at Indian Lake State Park to evaluate site conditions for replacement of the current lagoon with two drain fields.
- Consultants have submitted plans to EGLE for permits to build two new drain fields with monitoring wells at Indian Lake State Park.
- Bids were received and a contract awarded for new electrical line to the contact station at Palms Book State Park. Completion date is expected by June 30.
- Shingle replacement for the keeper's house and boat house at Seul Choix Point lighthouse is expected to go out for bids shortly.
- All seasonal and summer positions have been filled for the Indian Lake Unit.

### ***Muskallonge Lake State Park***

- The new boardwalk to Lake Superior construction continues and is about 85% complete. Anticipated completion date has been extended two weeks to the end of June.
- The campground road paving project pre-construction meeting took place on May 30. The contractor will take over the site and begin mobilization and construction on June 16. This project will force a closure of the campground and boating access site from June 15-October 1.
- Design and engineering (90%) is in progress for the wastewater/water distribution upgrades.
- All staff is hired and working for the season.
- Memorial Day weekend was busy, with the campground full for Friday and Saturday night.

- State forest campgrounds got a late start with the lingering snow late into spring. However, they rebounded with above average use over the holiday weekend with Lake Superior campground being the busiest.
- Rangers Cottrell and Hickmann both did a weeklong “tour” in the Gaylord district to assist with the ice storm damage clean-up working on chainsaw and chipper crews.

#### ***Newberry Field Office***

- Road grading at boating access sites & state forest campgrounds across the district.
- Vault toilet construction and placement.
- State forest campgrounds and boating access sites have been cleaned up and ready to go for the season.
- P.I. Ranger position has been filled with Timothy Cook who started April 27.
- Lead ranger position has been reposted to fill.
- State worker staff have been hired for the season.
- Memorial Day weekend was about average.

#### ***Tahquamenon Falls State Park***

- Lower Falls Portage Campground Electrical Improvements: Site Restoration is ongoing with the Portage campground slated to open on June 13.
- Upper Falls Brink Overlook: Continues to be under construction with a substantial completion date of July 31. The brink viewing platform is closed during construction, but the Upper Falls unit will remain open, including the three main viewing areas from above and the gorge steps.
- Lower Falls Boardwalk Repairs: Complete and has been open to the public since May 10.
- Lower Falls Water Distribution Project: On track to be completed in mid-June. The Hemlock campground will open for the season on June 27.
- Interviews will take place on June 16-17 to fill a seasonal ranger position that was vacated this past winter.
- The park will again host several races this summer, including the Two-Hearted Marathon, Tahqua Trail Run, and Wilderness Canoe Race. A new event will also be coming this year on September 20—Yoopers Running will be hosting the inaugural “Falls to Falls” race, which will feature a round trip race beginning & ending at the Upper Falls.
- Mosquito season is in full swing, with mornings and evenings being the worst.
- The Rivermouth campground has been full every night with the Lower Falls campgrounds being closed.
- The park was able to secure a hiker shuttle concessionaire this spring. Hunter Transportation will begin to provide daily shuttle services to the public on June 7.

#### ***Straits State Park/Mackinac Island State Harbor/Father Marquette***

- Straits State Park has a design build project underway for solar energy which will power the north campground and headquarters.
- The Father Marquette (Heart of Great Turtle Island) learning common building and pow wow grounds upgrade project is underway.
- Mackinac Island Harbor had replacement of 15 redi-rock wall caps replaced and repoured this spring.
- Straits State Park hired a new park ranger 6-E8 Jordan Osmon.
- Still have temporary summer staff positions open at Mackinac Island Harbor and potentially at Straits State Park as well.
- No upcoming events in the park but we expect to be full for the St. Ignace Car show.
- Lilac festival kicks off on Mackinac Island Harbor June 6.
- Memorial weekend attendance was near 100% with some openings on Friday and Sunday.
- Park seems to be off to slow start this season but with schools starting to get out the first week of June it should pick up after that.