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Michigan's Conservation Sentinel Since 1953

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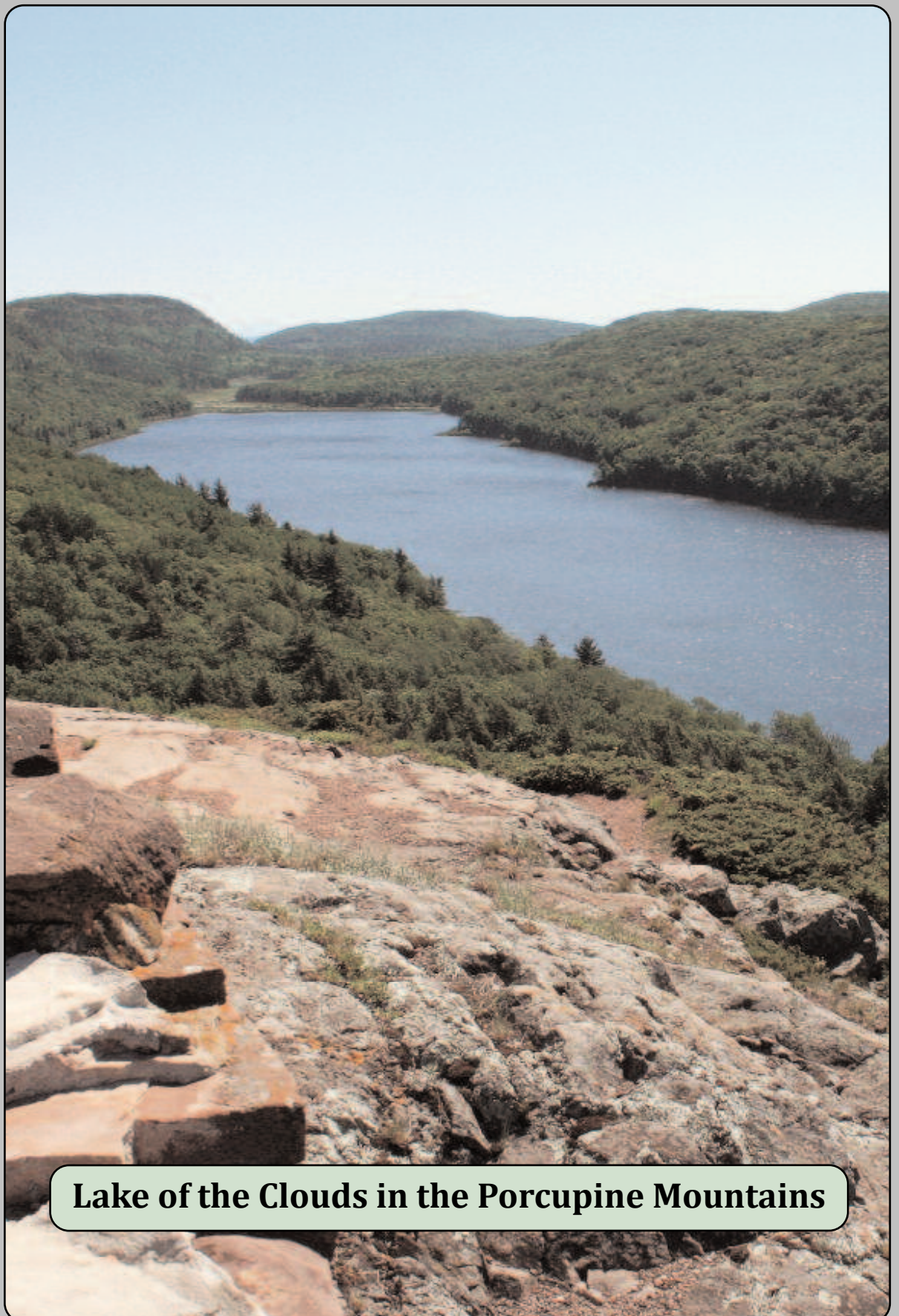
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Lake of the Clouds in the Porcupine Mountains

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THE NORTHWOODS CALL

Michigan's Conservation Sentinel Since 1953



North Woods Notes

ASIAN CARP: Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn apparently agrees that separating the Great Lakes and Mississippi River systems is the “ultimate solution” to keeping Asian carp out of the lakes, although he said it would be very costly to rework the Chicago canal that linked the watersheds a century ago. It would have to be a massive “national project,” he told other regional governors during a conference on Mackinac Island, and would require a significant financial investment.

DUNE “DRIVEWAY” NIXED: The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in May rejected an application to build a 1,200-foot road across a protected dune sanctuary in White River Township north of Muskegon. Area residents and conservationists had opposed the plan for an access drive across the White River Township Barrier Dunes Sanctuary for a proposed home site on private property north of the preserve. The DEQ reportedly agreed with opponents that the project would cause “unreasonable depletion and degradation of the diversity, quality and function of the critical dune area.”

SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT: Grand Valley State University’s Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center has received a \$44,000 grant from the Michigan Energy Office to study solar thermal systems. A portion of the grant will support review of solar systems installed in about 75 low-income houses in Muskegon and Oceana counties to analyze how well solar energy has worked for them. Some of the homes were originally outfitted with solar photovoltaic panels, while others have solar hot air/hot water systems.

RAINS & SEWAGE: This spring’s heavy rainfall pushed an estimated 1.5 billion gallons of raw and partially treated sewage into Michigan’s lakes, rivers and streams—demonstrating a need for greater investment in upgraded sanitary and storm sewers, according to reports. The state’s aging underground sewer systems are in sore need of modernization, officials say, and billions of dollars would be needed to accomplish that goal.

SEPTIC SYSTEM PROBLEMS: Several Michigan counties that require septic tank inspections during real estate transactions have reported septic system failure rates of between 20 to 25 percent, according to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality—a major threat to ground and surface water resources. According to a recent article written for *Bridge Magazine* by environmental writer Jeff Alexander, Michigan has the nation’s weakest regulations on septic systems.

“SMART” ELECTRIC METERS: Electric utilities across the United States have been replacing analog meters on homes during recent years, which they say will help them better manage demand on the power grid. The meters, they say—which monitor usage via radio frequency—give more accurate readings, eliminate in-person checks by utility workers, help utilities better pinpoint and respond to power outages and promote conservation. Some customers, however, are concerned with privacy issues and potential health problems caused by the meters—one claimed headaches, achy muscles, anxiety and sleep problems—and have protested what they say are exorbitant “opt-out” fees charged to those who do not want the electronic devices. The Michigan Public Service Commission has approved the fees, which in the case of DTE Energy, amount to \$67 up front and \$10 a month. Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette—who recommended no up-front charge and a monthly fee of no more than 74 cents—reportedly may challenge the regulatory agency’s decision in appeals court.

FRACKING & EXPORTS: It’s apparently not enough that energy industries and many government agencies are ignoring citizen protests over the practice of hydraulic fracturing to extract oil and gas resources. To add insult to injury, U.S. producers—such as Exxon Mobile and Sempra Energy—are seeking federal permits for projects aimed at exporting as many as 29 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day to other countries. If these projects are approved, conservationists say, it could lead to even more “fracking” on American soil.

ARTISTS AGAINST FRACKING: Several celebrity artists—including actresses Carrie Fisher, Susan Sarandon and Liv Tyler—have lent their voices to the anti-fracking movement. They appear with a variety of other artists in an avant-garde and somewhat silly music video of Sean Lennon’s song, “Don’t Frack My Mother,” which was recently produced. Lennon, son of the late ex-Beatle John Lennon, also appears in the video, as does his mother, Yoko Ono.

(Continued on Page 2)

DNR asks that Barry lawsuit be disposed

A hearing will be held July 2 in Barry County District Court on a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) request for “summary disposition” of a lawsuit filed against the agency by a Barry County citizens group.

The DNR claims that there is no genuine issue for trial in the suit filed last October on behalf of Michigan Land Air Water Defense (MLAWD), which is seeking to nullify the previous sale of oil and gas leases within Barry and Allegan State Game Areas—as well as in the Yankee Springs Recreation Area.

The lawsuit depends “on hypothetical future events which have not occurred and may not ever occur,” the DNR says. “Additionally, even if these events should occur at some point in the future, they would be sub-

ject to a well-established procedure” requiring a review and impact assessment by the Department of Environmental Quality, as well as public comment.

The “events” referenced in the motion include oil and gas development on the leased land, particularly via the unconventional method of hydraulic fracturing, which MLAWD says is inappropriate for property long held in the public trust and protected for recreational uses by citizens.

The lawsuit focuses only on a small fraction of the 4.5 million acres owned by the State of Michigan—those “special jewels” that the DNR has a “public trust” duty to protect, according to Jim Olson, a Traverse City attorney representing MLAWD.

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Michigan’s Civilian Conservation Corps

Most people probably don’t realize that a small remnant of President Franklin Roosevelt’s Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) is still alive in Michigan. The state program—inspired by the original CCC and once funded by a \$20 million endowment fund—is now operating on much less money from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) budget. It employed about 12 individuals at last count. In better times, hundreds of people worked on projects to help the DNR maintain state parks and waterways. But economic woes reportedly caused state officials to raid and drain the endowment fund in 2007 to cover budget deficits. With Michigan’s economy beginning to rebound, there’s talk in some circles of reviving the program to benefit parks and help under-employed people find work. This monument (left) at the CCC museum near Higgins Lake honors the original federal program, which operated from 1933 until 1942, employing more than 3 million men—102,814 in Michigan. During those Depression-era years, 484 million trees were planted and 156 million fish were stocked in state waterways, along with other stewardship projects.

Hunting & fishing revenue

Michigan license fee restructuring bill introduced

Legislation implementing Gov. Rick Snyder’s hunting and fishing license fee restructuring proposal has been introduced in the Michigan House by Rep. Jon Bumstead (R-Newaygo).

If approved, the proposed bill would raise approximately \$19.7 million for state coffers. It includes a five-year sunset provision, which allows officials to re-evaluated the results of this additional funding.

According to the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC), there have been a handful of changes and additions to the

legislation previously proposed and reported. These include a 72-hour fishing license for \$30 (resident and non-resident, alike); a seven-day small game license for non-residents for \$80; a waterfowl hunting license reinstated for \$12, a reinstated bear participation license (no kill tag) for \$15; free survey tags for certain furbearing species; a change in the Mentored Youth License from a combination deer license to a single deer license as part of the license package; creation of a combination hunt and fish license package (including a base license, combina-

tion deer license and all-species fishing license) for \$75 resident and \$265 non-resident; and creation of a \$1 surcharge on base, fishing and combination hunt and fish licenses that would be reserved for marketing, education and outreach activities.

The MUCC says it is concerned that some items were not retained in the new legislation, including elimination of the voluntary \$2 youth angler license for youth 10-16; and across-the-board discounts for youth ages 10-16 (junior hunting licenses.)

(Continued on Page 2)



One Year Later

A Department of Natural Resources crew plants a portion of 1.2 million jack pine seedlings being placed in the area impacted by last year's Duck Lake fire in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The extreme drought conditions blamed in part (along with lightning strikes) for the 2012 blaze, did not recur this spring, as much of the U.P. was still covered by snow in early May. Some dead trees remain in the fire zone as reminders of the incident, although much timber was salvaged before replanting efforts began.

—Michigan DNR photo

Our 60th Year: Looking Back to June 2, 1954

—Excerpts from *The North Woods Call*—

Whippoorwill

An early "Pine Whispers" column by Marguerite Gahagan

The big dipper spilled star-speckled magic over the north woods sky.

It was high in the sky—not as bright as in late fall, not shooting flaming brightness, but soft, blue-white. Soft blue against the full white of the full moon. The moon full-round, flooding the lake to overflowing with silver.

But the big dipper spilled music. The music came from around the lake. It seemed to echo so that one never knew from whence it came, from which side, from the hills, or from the swale. But it came, the echoing music of the repeated and repeated call of the whippoorwill.

There was frost in the air and the lake was still, so still that the sound of a fish, a silver fish, silvered by the moon wash, slapped against man's consciousness. In a tree a bird rustled and on the shoreline a night-walking woods creature stirred a dry leaf.

All about one was life—moving, living, going about its mysterious live-or-die business. And around one was the call of the whippoorwill from the pines on the hills along the swale, behind one from the deep woods, again and again, a dozen times, a hundred times, without break, without breath, constant, urgent, the whippoorwill, whippoorwill, whippoorwill.

It was answered from the south, from deep in the south woods far away, a faint image of the bird nearby. It came then from the swale—louder, more persistent, growing, swelling—and it was not one, but two, three, a dozen. Calling, answering, joining, drowning out the distant whippoorwill from the south.

Suddenly, they ceased, dwindling, until but one gave its liquid repetitious notes. And then silence.

The silence beat against one after the full chorus. The night was still, but for the gentle wash of an almost silent lake and the night itself, noise of the spring peepers in the swale, a part of the night, a part of the darkness moonwashed.

A shivery, a tremulous, and almost fey-like cry came on the silence. From far behind the pine woods on the east shore it came; the trembling cry of a hoot owl, and then the chorus came again—one and then two, echoing, joining from all around the little moon-bathed lake, with tall trees casting black images in the silver wash—came the whippoorwill of the brown birds.

One came nearer and nearer, drawn by the yellow glow of the cabin light, by man-made light competing foolishly with the moon's silver. One came and cried from the cabin roof, thumping with its short, blunt tail, beating its own rhythm to its whippoorwill, whippoorwill on the log—thumping with its own secret power—message thrown to the woods, unknown to man listening, awed by its repeated and repeated and repeated a hundredfold call.

The north woods echoed to the call from hill and swale, from woods to woods. The whippoorwill brought spring, brought summer, brought budding greenness and hot sunshine, brought the deep woods nearer, brought the untouched, the secret north country, the ages old, the era of pine, the time of the hardwoods, the story of the great forests.

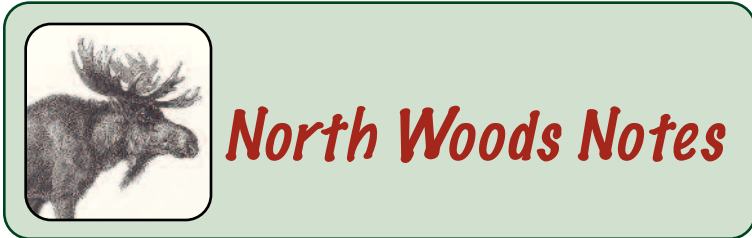
The whippoorwill came. He came from the north and the south, the east and the west. He sang under the Big Dipper. He sang into the full moon. He sang to the faint stirring of the calm evening wind in the pines.

He sang to the ageless accompaniment of spring.

Help compile *The North Woods Call* history

If you have stories to share about *The North Woods Call*, or photos and background information about the newspaper's role in Michigan conservation history, please contact us at:

editor@mynorthwoodscall.com



North Woods Notes

(Continued from Page 1)

WOLF HUNT SPECIFICS: For those interested in taking part in the newly approved wolf hunt in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the season will run from Nov. 15 until Dec. 31, 2013, or until target harvests are reached. A total of 1,200 licenses will be available for over-the-counter purchase on a first-come, first-served basis, beginning August 13. Licenses will be valid for all three established wolf management units—Gogebic County (16 wolves to be taken), portions of Baraga, Houghton, Ontonagon and Gogebic counties (19 wolves) and portions of Luce and Mackinac counties (eight wolves). The bag limit is one wolf per person per year—using firearm, crossbow, bow-and-arrow, or foothold traps.

YIKES! An estimated 79 gallons of diluted radioactive water were released into Lake Michigan on May 4, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The rogue water from the Palisades Nuclear Power Plant in southwestern Michigan's Covert Township had leaked from a 300,000-gallon storage tank and ran down a drain into a basin, they said, where "an extreme dilution factor" occurred, whatever that means. The incident did not represent a public health or safety risk, the NRC said.

CLIMATE CHANGE & SPORT FISH: The impact of climate change on Lake Superior could mean better conditions for some sport fish and worse conditions for others, according to research funded by Wisconsin Sea Grant. Water temperature changes over the past 27 years have made conditions more favorable for Chinook salmon, walleye and lean lake trout, researchers said, and less favorable for siscowet lake trout, which prefer colder water and have lost about 20 percent of their historical habitat.

MILITARY FISHING & HUNTING: Free fishing and hunting licenses are now available to active-duty members of the U.S. military, providing they enlisted as Michigan residents and have maintained that resident status. Such individuals may receive free-of-charge a resident military all-species fishing license, or any hunting license for which a lottery is not required. Previously, military members paid \$1 for a resident all-species fishing license, or a hunting license not requiring a lottery.

KIRTLAND'S WARBLER RETURNS: The Gaylord-based Huron Pines organization, which is managing a program aimed at ensuring a lasting and sustainable Kirtland's Warbler population, reports that the birds have returned to Michigan. Karen Arquette of Grayling reportedly captured a photo showing one of the rare songbirds on May 7, indicating that the birds were making their way back to their nesting grounds after wintering in the Bahamas. Huron Pines, meanwhile, is continuing to enlist partners and gather steam in its ongoing effort to help usher the Kirtland's warbler off the federal Endangered Species List (see *The North Woods Call* Vol. 60, No. 3—Late December 2012).

FREE FISHING WEEKEND: Michigan's fishing season is in high gear and anglers can enjoy free fishing on Saturday, June 8, and Sunday, June 9. On that weekend, both residents and non-residents can fish without a license, though all other fishing regulations will apply. For more information, visit www.michigan.gov/freefishing.

CORRECTION:

Best-laid plans ... & public recreation areas

Oops! We got our proposals a bit confused in the last issue (Vol. 60, No. 11) when we reported about public meetings to discuss Michigan "forest plans."

In reality, the proposed plans that were discussed in the meetings referenced were for the use and management of Michigan's public recreation areas—everything but forests, which have separate regional plans that recently entered the discussion phase.

Our apologies for the mix-up and thanks to one of our favorite *Call* readers for pointing it out.

DNR: Spring fish kills are common

Each spring—once ice has melted from Michigan's lakes—it is common to discover dead fish, or other aquatic creatures, according to Michigan Department of Natural Resources officials.

Winter snow and ice cover create conditions that cause fish, soft-shell turtles, frogs, toads and crayfish to die, they said.

"Winterkill is the most common type of fish kill," said DNR Fisheries Division Production Manager Gary Whalen. "It is particularly common in shallow lakes and streams. These kills are often localized and typically do not impact fish populations, or fishing quality."

—Michigan DNR report

Hunt/fishing fee restructuring bill

(Continued from Page 1)

The organization has recommended adding a combination hunt and fish junior license for \$30 (a 60 percent discount from adult licenses) and has asked the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to consider the feasibility of allowing juniors to purchase additional licenses at senior prices.

The DNR has said that making the junior discount match the senior discounted items would lose \$1.2 million of the proposed funding increase and complicate the system. Nearly every other state surrounding Michigan has junior discounted licenses, according to the MUCC.

The MUCC—which believes that getting kids outdoors is at least as important as giving seniors their discounts—is asking its members to weigh in on this issue.



The "100-Pound Wolf"

*We have learned that the wolf shown in this photo (at left)—which appeared in the last issue of *The North Woods Call*—wasn't necessarily as large as previous estimates suggested. Original reports of the wolf weighing in at 100 pounds have since been revised downward by Department of Natural Resources officials, we are told. Most Michigan wolves are reportedly in the 60- to 80-pound range, a *Call* reader reports, although our in-office reference guide—*McGraw Hill's Field Guide of Natural History (2nd Edition)*—says that male gray wolves can weigh as much as 150 pounds. The wolf was hit by a car last winter in Gogebic County in Michigan's western Upper Peninsula. The photo was originally posted on the Facebook page of Michigan Whitetail Pursuit and has been making the rounds on the Internet.*

For updates, t-shirts & caps, visit our website at: www.mynorthwoodscall.com



Also follow us on Facebook, Twitter & Blogger



Harry Whiteley Honored

—Michigan DNR photo

The longest-serving member of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) was honored May 9 with the dedication of the Harry H. Whiteley Conservation Education Building at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center on Higgins Lake. Whiteley, 93, (shown above during the dedication ceremony) was appointed to the NRC by Gov. John Swainson in 1961 and served as a commissioner for 25 years, including several times as chairman. Whiteley, who spent much of his career in the newspaper industry, was born into an outdoor-oriented family and the P.H. Hoeft State Park near Rogers City is named after his grandfather. His public service was not limited to the NRC; he also served on the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission and the Michigan Travel Commission. Whiteley—praised during the dedication ceremony by former NRC member Bob Garner as “the gold standard of conservation on the NRC”—said there was no place he’d rather be honored than at the MacMullan Center. “I just think that Michigan is the greatest piece of real estate on earth,” Whiteley said. “I hope we never lose sight of the great gift God gave us when he created the outdoors.”

DNR research vessels study Great Lakes fisheries

All four Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) research vessels are back on the water, conducting annual surveys of Great Lakes fish populations.

The vessels are critical to the DNR’s mission to conserve, protect and manage the Great Lakes for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations, officials said.

The surveys are designed to estimate relative abun-

dance, biomass, age, growth, health, diet, survival rates, natural reproduction and movements of fish in the Great Lakes.

The vessels have home ports at Great Lakes stations in Marquette, Alpena, Charlevoix and Harrison Township, but work throughout the lakes on a variety of efforts. They generally operate from the time the ice clears until well into November.

—Michigan DNR report

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

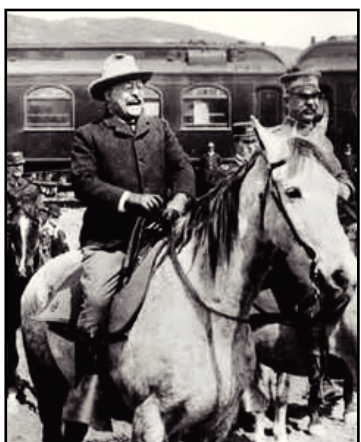
North Dakota badlands helped shape 26th president’s conservation ethic

MEDORA, N.D.—Many of Theodore Roosevelt’s attitudes about nature and conservation were sharpened in the badlands of North Dakota.

“I never would have been president if it had not been for my experiences in North Dakota,” the nation’s 26th chief executive said when reflecting on his life’s major influences.

Roosevelt (1858-1919)—a Nobel Peace Prize winner, distinguished naval historian, New York governor, vice president and president of the United States—first went to the badlands in September 1883. Before returning home to New York, he became interested in the cattle business and joined two other men as partners in the Maltese Cross Ranch.

The next year, he returned and established a second open-range ranch—the Elkhorn—as his own operation while continuing as a Maltese Cross partner, giving him



Roosevelt arrives at Yellowstone National Park in 1903.

The North Woods Call on the Road

Recognizing that Michigan’s conservation ethic is tied to (and supported by) ongoing efforts elsewhere, The North Woods Call will occasionally profile places and people across the United States that help tell the story of America’s conservation movement.



Theodore Roosevelt is known as the “first conservation president”

invaluable experience as a rancher and businessman.

As interested as Roosevelt may have been in ranching, what initially took him to the badlands was the prospect of big game hunting. But when he arrived, the last large herds of buffalo were gone, having been decimated by hide hunters and disease.

In the years he was able to spend time in North Dakota, mostly hunting and tending to his ranches, he became more and more alarmed by the damage that was being done to the land and its wildlife.

Roosevelt witnessed first-hand the virtual destruction of some big

game species. Overgrazing destroyed the grasslands and with them the habitats for small mammals and songbirds. As a result, conservation increasingly became one of the future president’s major concerns.

When he became president in 1901, Roosevelt pursued his interest in natural history by establishing the U.S. Forest Service and by signing the 1906 Antiquities Act under which he proclaimed 18 national monuments.

He also obtained Congressional approval to establish five national parks and 55 wildlife refuges, and set aside land as national forests. Through the efforts

New game laws praised and skewered

Hunting and fishing groups say they are pleased with a pair of new Michigan laws allowing the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to name game species and protect hunting and fishing rights.

“These bills protect the rights of hunters, anglers and trappers, and ensure that wildlife management decisions are based on the recommendations of biologists—not out-of-state anti-hunters,” said Michigan United Conservation Clubs Executive Director Erin McDonough. “We thank Gov. Snyder for continuing Michigan’s tradition of separating conservation from politics today.”

Senate Bill 288 extends the NRC’s authority and “sound science mandate” to select animals for the game species list, while retaining the legislature’s authority to do the same and its exclusive authority to remove game species, according to an MUCC press release. The bill also grants the NRC exclusive authority to issue fisheries orders, which currently rests with the director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and also provides free licenses to active-duty members of the military.

Senate Bill 289, meanwhile, establishes the rights to hunt and fish in state law, and makes protection of those rights a purpose of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act.

Hunting and fishing enthusiasts have heralded these bills as extensions of voter-approved Proposal G of 1996, which granted the Natural Resources Commission exclusive authority over game management and required it to use sound science in its wildlife management decisions, MUCC officials said.

Opponents of the bills, however—such as the Humane Society of the United States and Keep Michigan Wolves Protected—have criticized the action, which effectively neutered a proposed ballot referendum on wolf hunting in Michigan. Senate Bill 288, in particular, has resulted in Michigan’s 7.4 million registered voters losing their right to decide whether to protect Michigan’s declining population of wolves in the November 2014 election, they said, noting that the bill was fast-tracked through the legislative process before petition signatures from registered voters could be certified.

“The governor’s action (in signing the bills) validates the perception that state government is broken and does not reflect the best interests of the people it is supposed to serve,” said Jill Fritz, director of Keep Michigan Wolves Protected. “This is a dark day in Michigan for people who believe in fundamental democratic principles and the humane treatment of animals.”

“Our members have lost dogs and pets to wolves,” countered Joe Hudson, president of the Upper Peninsula Bear Houndsman Association. “We’re happy to see that the DNR will finally have the management tools it needs to help limit wolf conflicts up here and that decisions about how it manages wildlife will be made based on sound science, not television commercials.”

of Roosevelt and others, bison were saved from extinction.

Although at first glance the badlands landscape appears inhospitable and barren, it is home to a great variety of creatures and plants. Rainfall, scanty though it is, nourishes the grasses that cover the land. And when the wildflowers bloom, they add vibrant colors to the reds, browns and greens of the grass and earth.

More than 125 species of birds live here and visitors can enjoy their songs much as Theodore Roosevelt did. “One of our sweetest, loudest songsters is the meadowlark,” he wrote. “The Plains air seems to give it a voice and it will perch on top of a bush or tree and sing for hours in rich, bubbling tones.”

Both mule deer and whitetail deer inhabit the area. Prairie dogs, historically a staple food source for many predators, live in “towns” in the grassland. Through careful management, some animals that nearly became extinct are once again living here. Buffalo and elk, for example, were reintroduced in 1956 and 1985, respectively.

By force of will, Theodore Roosevelt overcame a sickly childhood and took particular pride in leading what he called the “strenuous life.” He gained national recognition with his heroic assault leading the Rough Riders on San Juan Hill in Cuba during the Spanish American War, and was noted for his big-game hunt-

ing expeditions in the American West, Africa and South America.

As a conservationist who reportedly fished in southwestern Michigan’s Kalamazoo River, Roosevelt was a major figure in American history. He made notable contributions to paleontology, taxidermy and ornithology. His appreciation of nature—withstanding the indiscriminate slaughter that characterized many hunting expeditions of the time—led to some of the most noteworthy conservation measures of any U.S. administration.

In the badlands of North Dakota, where many of his personal concerns first gave rise to his later environmental efforts, he is now remembered with a national park that bears his name and honors his memory.

—Information for this article courtesy of the National Park Service/New World Encyclopedia.



Roosevelt was an avid hunter and outdoorsman.

Opinion Page

Conservation Quote

"He is the kind of politician who would cut down a redwood tree, then mount the stump and make a speech about conservation."

— Adlai Stevenson

"Expert" rule versus the people

We've mentioned this before and don't want to beat a dead wolf over it, but we're still uncomfortable with a state government that doesn't think voters are smart enough to make informed choices over policy issues.

Michigan's Public Act 21 of 2013—which empowers bureaucrats to designate game species regardless of whether a majority of voters were to oppose such a designation in a proposed statewide referendum—is just the latest example of this.

We respect state wildlife managers and believe they have the expertise to make sound judgements about wolf hunts and other such activities, but we don't like to see intentional end-runs around Michigan citizens who are exercising their constitutional rights to place an issue on the general election ballot.

It's true that few of us are expert wildlife biologists, or schooled in other disciplines affecting the scientific stewardship of our natural resources. We should always consult such experts when these decisions are to be made. However, in a representative republic, the people's voice is sacrosanct and should be heard.

After all, do the "experts" always make the right decisions?

Just ask the "anti-fracking" opponents of ongoing oil & gas lease sales—particularly in state parks, recreation areas and other publicly owned natural areas—for an answer to that one.

Michigan dunes need protection

With recent changes to Michigan's 1989 Sand Dune Protection and Management Act that has many developers salivating for more lakeshore construction, the state's fragile dune ecology is under attack.

It's imperative that conservation-minded citizens insist that these important natural areas be protected.

Dune habitats feature highly specialized plants and animals, including numerous rare species, and some that are endangered.

In addition to the general beauty of the dune landscape, these areas also play an important role in protecting the land against potential ravages by storm waves from the Great Lakes.

While they may seem barren to the casual observer, dunes support a vibrant ecosystem, where plants interact with blowing sand to create sand formations and to stabilize them. Sometimes the stabilization is only temporary, as the dunes often shift, migrate and re-form over time.

The widespread expansion of human population has resulted in dune destruction through land development and recreational uses, as well as from alteration to prevent the encroachment of sand onto inhabited areas.

If you've spent any time in the dunes along the coast of west Michigan, or walked over the amazing formations at the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the northern Lower Peninsula, you can appreciate the value that these geographic land forms represent.

We need to stand behind the citizens and communities currently fighting against the plans of developers who threaten their dunes.

Informed citizens: A learning opportunity from Hillsdale College

Everyone seems to have an opinion these days and, naturally, most people think their own ideas are correct. Unfortunately, modern notions blow like tumbleweeds in the political winds and few people can hear other voices above the atmospheric roar.

As a result, we tend to make life-changing decisions based on misinformation spewed by self-serving demagogues—skilled at manipulating the masses—rather than on our own knowledge of the facts. And, too often, we filter everything through whatever political philosophy captures our personal fancy, thumbing our noses at alternative ideas and philosophies.

Because few of us have ever been—or ever will be—politicians, we think it would be useful if Americans stopped viewing every discussion as "political"—worthy of attention if it comes from "our side" and contemptible if it comes from the other. Why not begin looking at the thoughts of our fellow citizens as simply ideas worth considering? After all, we supposedly all love liberty and justice, and want to hand the best nation possible down to our children and grandchildren.

Most of us would probably agree that understanding our collective history and having accurate information on which to base our civic debate is vital to a free society. Without it, we can't make the best decisions going forward.

Hillsdale College in southern Michigan is attempting to address this need by offering free online courses in American history and the U.S. Constitution. We currently are participating in some of these courses, and are impressed by the thoroughness and relative objectivity with which the information is presented.

There are video lectures, supplemental readings, question-

Mothers' Day lessons from the natural world

Last month's Mothers' Day celebration at our house was blessed with a magnificent display of nature's beauty.

In addition to the majesty radiated by women who have fulfilled the duties of motherhood with great honor, selflessness and dedication, we were reminded of God's own glory by a colorful display of birds at the feeders in our back yard.

There were bright-red cardinals, sunny yellow goldfinches, red-bellied and hairy woodpeckers, blue-gray nuthatches and two pairs of rose-breasted grosbeaks—all at the same time—among assorted other avian critters.

Not bad for a collection of hanging feeders that for one reason or another have been largely bereft of life over the past winter.

Such gracious exhibits of outdoor wonder always cause me to pause and consider the architect behind this resource-rich planet on which we live. There is such incredible artistry, mathematical precision and divine order behind all that we euphemistically call "Mother Nature."

And some would have us believe that it is all the result of random happenstance.

The Christian holy book, however, instructs otherwise: "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse (Romans 1:20)."

Every man and woman, of course, is free to choose whether to accept that instruction, but individual refusal to believe something doesn't make it any less universally true. I, for one, don't entirely understand how so many of my fellow sojourners can miss something so obvious, but I know that many do.

How can one not be humbled by the supernatural bounty that we see all around us—not only in the awesome appearance of winged creatures, but in all the richly diverse living things that



Rose-breasted grosbeak



Cardinal



Goldfinch



Red-bellied woodpecker

populate the natural world? The microscopic complexity of a single cell is in-and-of-itself enough to cause me to embrace intelligent design and reflect upon its meaning.

But the purpose here is not to debate theology—or even reality—but simply to express appreciation for all that we have been given by our earthly mothers and beyond.

Fathers' Day will be here soon, and with it yet another opportunity to count the blessings that emanate from caring parents and a loving home. Far too many children these days grow up without the safety, support and encouragement that an intact family provides. And for that we're all the poorer.

I assume that the colorful birds I see at our back-yard feeder do not contemplate such weighty issues. Their lives and personal responsibilities are hard-wired into them to be carried out without much argument.

But men and women have been given a choice—to internalize the truths and lessons so loudly proclaimed by the natural world, or to ignore them at our peril.

We have been allowed to use our creativity and intellect to solve many pressing problems and invent numerous life-improving devices. For that we can be grateful.

Yet, while we boast about these great achievements and celebrate the glory of our own minds, we are daily fouling our collective nest. We are abusing our resources, polluting our spiritual lives, tearing apart the world's social fabric, and crushing the God-inspired institutions that have given structure and purpose to the human experience.

Looking beyond the sunflower seeds, cracked corn and suet that hangs outside our windows and nourishes our feathered visitors, I'm not sure the choices we are making are the right ones.

Are you?

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DNR pushes back on Barry County lawsuit

(Continued from Page 1)

"These areas are not part of the overall state forest system land to be used for all purposes," Olson said. "They are special areas that should be used for the purposes for which they are designated."

The Barry State Game Area and the Yankee Springs Recreation Area, for example, are among the most significant natural areas in southwestern Michigan. Collectively, they comprise 22,000 acres of public open space and wildlife habitat.

Known as "the Central Park of southern Michigan," this protected area includes much state land and supports numerous game, non-game and federally listed endangered species such as the Cerulean warbler, eastern Massauga rattlesnake, Indiana bat and Mitchell's satyr butterfly.

The region also contains the headwaters of the Thornapple and Gun Plain rivers, as well as the pristine Glass Creek watershed. Many fish and wildlife species depend on these freshwater resources and the large expanses of habitat with outstanding ecological value.

But the DNR's continuing sale of oil and gas leases—particularly of or near special parcels that could be negatively impacted by fracking-related activities—is a serious threat, opponents say.

"The DNR claims that there is



Fish Lake is just one of the pristine natural assets in the Barry State Game Area that could be threatened by oil and gas development.

no public trust legal protection for state parks and recreation areas, or game and wildlife," Olson said. In addition, he said, the agency maintains that relevant applications for oil and gas development permits have not yet been made and, if they are, the Department of Environmental Quality will examine the environmental impacts at that time.

"The problem with that argument," Olson said, "is that the decision generating a new land use with unavoidable impacts has already been made [with the lease sales]. We're contesting that—saying that the DNR has a duty to first consider the cumulative impacts of these lease sales. The only point where the state can protect these special values is at the point of sale. Once they sell the oil and gas development rights, those rights are gone."

The DNR says that what was sold were "nondevelopment leases" which don't allow use of the land surface, anyway. But Olson says this doesn't prevent such activities from occurring on adjacent land, resulting in noise, heavy truck traffic, wastewater problems and other undesirable consequences.

"We need to be doing a cumulative impact analysis first," Olson said. People have already been using these designated natural areas for a host of outdoor activities, he said, so the land is off-limits. "The state has gone too far," he said, "when they start smacking up against the [land-use] values we've already established—and those values far outweigh the economic values [of oil and gas development]."

The North Woods Call will discuss this further in the next issue.

The Wild Nearby

By Tom Springer



Turtle savers of the world unite

There's so much four-legged carnage along the roads of Michigan that it's easy to get jaded by the sight of it all.

A rigor-mortised deer; a rancid raccoon; a dead opossum that's no longer just playing possum—they rush past like so many furry speed bumps, with only a self-interested crow or turkey vulture to officiate over their gory remains.

Not so the noble turtle. To see one thus slaughtered seems particularly sad and deeply unfair. I mean, it's a turtle, for God's sake. It can't dash, hop or turn on a dime like a squirrel or deer can. No, a turtle's ponderous slog across pavement almost always ends with disaster on the half-shell. There's either a sickening crunch or a carom shot that makes them spin off the road like a jettisoned hubcap.

Once a turtle gets whacked, it's generally done for. Its wonderfully adapted shell, a lifelong home and fortress impervious to all other predators, did not evolve to withstand the 3,000-pound footprint of an automobile. Still, this won't deter a turtle from its stoic and quixotic quest to cross a two or four-lane gauntlet of asphalt.

So in a response that's no less quixotic, I've started a new club to help them. It's called the Free and Self-Appointed Protectorate of Esteemed Michigan Turtle Savers. Anyone can join. There are no dues, newsletters, meetings, or administrative balderdash of any kind. In fact, here's all that a Turtle Saver in good-standing needs to do: stop, and pick up a turtle whenever they see one about do something fatally bone-headed like cross a busy road.

Then, carefully and safely (no need to make yourself road kill) take the turtle to the other side. Be sure to carry them toward the direction they're already headed. Most likely, they're driven by a strong biological urge to build a nest, or find a critical food source. They really need to go that way, and your human logic isn't going to convince them otherwise. For good measure, place the turtle 20 feet or so beyond the road shoulder so that they're concealed by natural habitat.

And be extra careful when you move a snapping turtle. The first time you pick one up, you'll see why. With its long neck extended, a snapper's frightful jaws can reach about anywhere on its body. And fast. So grab them by the base of their tail, although carefully as to not damage any vertebra. Does this method give them a backache? Possibly, but since I write slowly enough as it is, I really need to keep all 10 fingers intact.

Also, know that it's not just big turtles—snappers or otherwise—that need to be saved.

One day in early summer my daughter found a baby snapper in a roadside mud puddle. She named him Leonard, and for two weeks he lived in a tub on our front porch where he ate worms and lettuce. But a turtle deserves more from life than a Tupperware holding cell. So we carried Leonard to a pleasantly weedy and buggy irrigation pond about a ½ mile away.

On our walk back, a farmer drove up in his four-wheeler to investigate. We were, after all, trespassers on his property. These days, along with droughts and insect pests, farmers have to worry about thieves who strip electric cable from their irrigation systems. Or, steal their ammonia fertilizer to make streets drugs like meth.

"How you doin'?" he asked cautiously.

Once we explained our turtle rescue and release mission, his lined face relaxed a bit. It didn't hurt that one of our party had blonde pig tails and a Snoopy shirt.

"Oh yeah, they're really on the move now," he said. "This morning we found a big ole snapper in the corn field so we put her back in the pond, too."

Here he was, a haggard farmer probably in his mid-50s with a thousand acres worth of reasons to do something else. True, there was no desperation here of the apocalyptic Tom Joad variety. But I don't doubt he's got some hypertension and a heap of six-figure debt riding on this year's corn harvest. Yet somehow, he'd just added the title of Turtle Saver to his already endless job description.

Why? Maybe it's because we humans already spend too much of our days in shells of our own making. Only ours, with their climate control and tinted windows (and that includes most new tractors), can insulate and alienate us from the plight of other creatures. Maybe that's why it feels good to commit a random act of turtle rescue. It protects something within ourselves that's wild, stubborn and equally worth saving.

Share your thoughts and ideas

The North Woods Call welcomes letters and viewpoint articles. Please write tightly and include your name and contact information.

(Ideally, *Viewpoint* articles will be 700 words or less).

A note to letter writers

All letters must be signed. Please include your name and mailing address (e-mail address, too, if you don't mind).

We won't publish addresses or phone numbers, but we must have them to verify that letters are authentic. No unsigned letters will be used. It's OK for your signature to be electronic.

Tips for planting trees: Putting the green end up

You don't want to be close to one when it falls, or is struck by lightning, and it's unsafe to run into them unless they're small.

That said, there aren't too many things you can buy that possess the value and utility of a tree.

Carbon dioxide absorption and oxygen production. Temperature modification. Flood and erosion control. Food and cover for the wild critters most of us enjoy having around. Building materials and fuel. Aesthetic beauty/tourist dollars. All are vital to our way of life here in the Great Lakes states.

As with many fish and game species, natural reproduction isn't always enough to serve our often excessive needs. We must plant, nurture, and continue planting.

There are a number of large maples in my old neighborhood in southwest Lansing, grown from winged seeds and tended through the sapling stage by myself and a handful of childhood pals. Not a bad legacy for a group of kids.

Over the years I've tried to contribute to our environment by planting trees whenever financial resources allowed and a suitable piece of ground was available. Nothing heroic; an afternoon's work, muddy hands, a sore back, and a lighter wallet aren't really major sacrifices.

Many of the trees were seedlings purchased from the Soil Conservation Service through a local County Extension Service office. Today, you'd want to get in touch with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, which has offices in many counties and still promotes a spring planting program. They're rea-

sonably priced and provide genetically solid, healthy stock. Yes, contrary to a popular strain of political belief, our government still engages in activities that benefit us all.

Whether you're trying to reforest a large parcel, or just wanting to see a fresh blob of color in a backyard or lot, the process is pretty simple. Spud or spade an appropriate-sized hole and take care while tamping those fragile root systems into place. "Make sure you put the green end up," I was dourly instructed by a tree farmer in whose employ I once labored.

Several less obvious techniques also help increase a young tree's survivability.

Plant when the sun is down. Direct sunlight can permanently deactivate exposed roots in a matter of minutes. Better yet, plant in inclement weather whenever possible. Extra moisture, whether from rain or snow, gives most seedlings a head start.

Secondly, know your trees and the soil and light conditions in which they thrive. A shady swamp may stunt a red pine, but will be fine for willows and some maples. Tree sellers usually distribute printed tags or instructions describing the optimum conditions for each species.

A third tip: Diversify. Planting different types of trees in the same area will usually prevent insects, disease, and fungal blight

from wiping out your entire project, and can provide a pleasing contrast of colors, shapes, and habitats over years of growth.

Another suggestion: Be willing to spend the money required to obtain good quality. Follow with conscientious planting and as much after-care as possible. Private nurseries carry a wide variety of trees and shrubs, larger, more mature, (and more expensive) than the typical government seedlings.

Finally, if ever you need to remove a young tree from an unsuitable location, and can take or make the time, gently extract the entire plant and transfer it to a healthier spot. A spindly spruce removed from the ground next to our home's foundation eight years ago is now, with only an occasional extra watering, a stout ten-footer thriving along our southern property line.

Time is a critical but abstract factor. Most tree planters tend to look at life from a long-term perspective. Many of the beautiful and environmentally stable woodlands we currently enjoy were planted by folks who have long-since passed away. The Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps comes to mind. They "paid it forward" for us, and I think they'd expect us to do the same for future generations. So try to get out there and stick more of those green things into the ground.

Outdoor Rhythms

By Doug Freeman



The Natural World

By Richard Schinkel



The case for a cane pole

Growing up, I was, much like [North Woods Call columnist] Tom Springer.

I wandered the countryside. I lived on a farm with a stream and woods. We as kids spent most of our time chasing around the stream and woods catching whatever we could.

I remember my first experience at fishing in the creek at age 7 or 8. We broke some willow branches and found some white string that you used to wrap packages with. We took some straight pins and bent it to resemble a hook. We then found some earth worms and went to the creek.

Sneaking up to the creek, we put the hooks into (what we considered deep) a fishing hole. In retrospect, it was less than 18 inches deep and about a yard wide. The only thing we caught were chubs—some almost six inches long. My mother was a saint, as she cleaned them and we actually had them for supper.

One of my duties at the Sarett Nature Center was to create a fishing course for six-graders that we took camping for a week as a part of their school curriculum. The property we used had two lakes and we could teach fishing and canoeing.

In doing my research with the different fishing groups, they were more than eager to help. The most important thing that I discovered was that surveys have found that—if a kid hasn't fished by the age of 14—more than likely he or she won't fish. I believe this would also be true of hunting and all outdoor sports.

We received all kinds of free help from companies that sold fishing equipment—fish line, hooks, books, lures, rods, reels and of course all kinds of advice.

We would teach the students in groups of five to eight at a time. We would first discuss the natural history of fish, laws and fishing terms. They would then find worms, insects, etc. to bait their hooks and we would go fishing.

We used open-faced spinning rods and my biggest challenge was to untangle lines. This, of course, took away from the excitement of fishing.

I think the problem would be solved if we had used cane poles as I did as a child and as did my wife. Many kids get their first chance at fishing from docks and the shore, so the cane pole makes sense. Most of the fish were caught close to shore, so a spinning rod wasn't necessary and actually proved to be a detriment.

We also taught the same course during the summer over a longer period and had good success, as I believe some experience was present before the class.

We were fortunate that the nature center is a short distance from Lake Michigan and could hook up with some charter boat captains. These captains realized the importance of getting to kids with the sport and each volunteered an afternoon of free fishing with them.

Each boat only took three kids and the day was unbelievable! Every kid caught at least one big fish. You could actually see their chests puff up with the stories they told when returning to the dock and their parents. These kids are going to be fishermen for life.

Every kid should experience the out-of-doors in some manner early in their childhood. Even today, I have adult bankers, professionals, etc. telling me how much fun they had [participating in such activities as] camping, canoeing, fishing, hiking, etc.

Richard Schinkel is a retired naturalist, educator and businessman living in Berrien Springs, Michigan. A graduate of Lake Michigan College and Western Michigan University (WMU), he taught both junior high and high school and has been an adjunct faculty member at Lake Michigan College, WMU and Michigan State University, as well as head naturalist at the Sarett Nature Center.

The politics of climate change

U.S. residents who believe that there is a scientific consensus on global warming are more likely to support government action to curb emissions—regardless of whether they are Republican or Democrat—according to a study led by a Michigan State University sociologist.

But a political divide remains on the existence of climate change, despite the fact that “most” scientists reportedly believe it is real, said Aaron M. Mc-

Cright, associate professor in Lyman-Briggs College and the Department of Sociology.

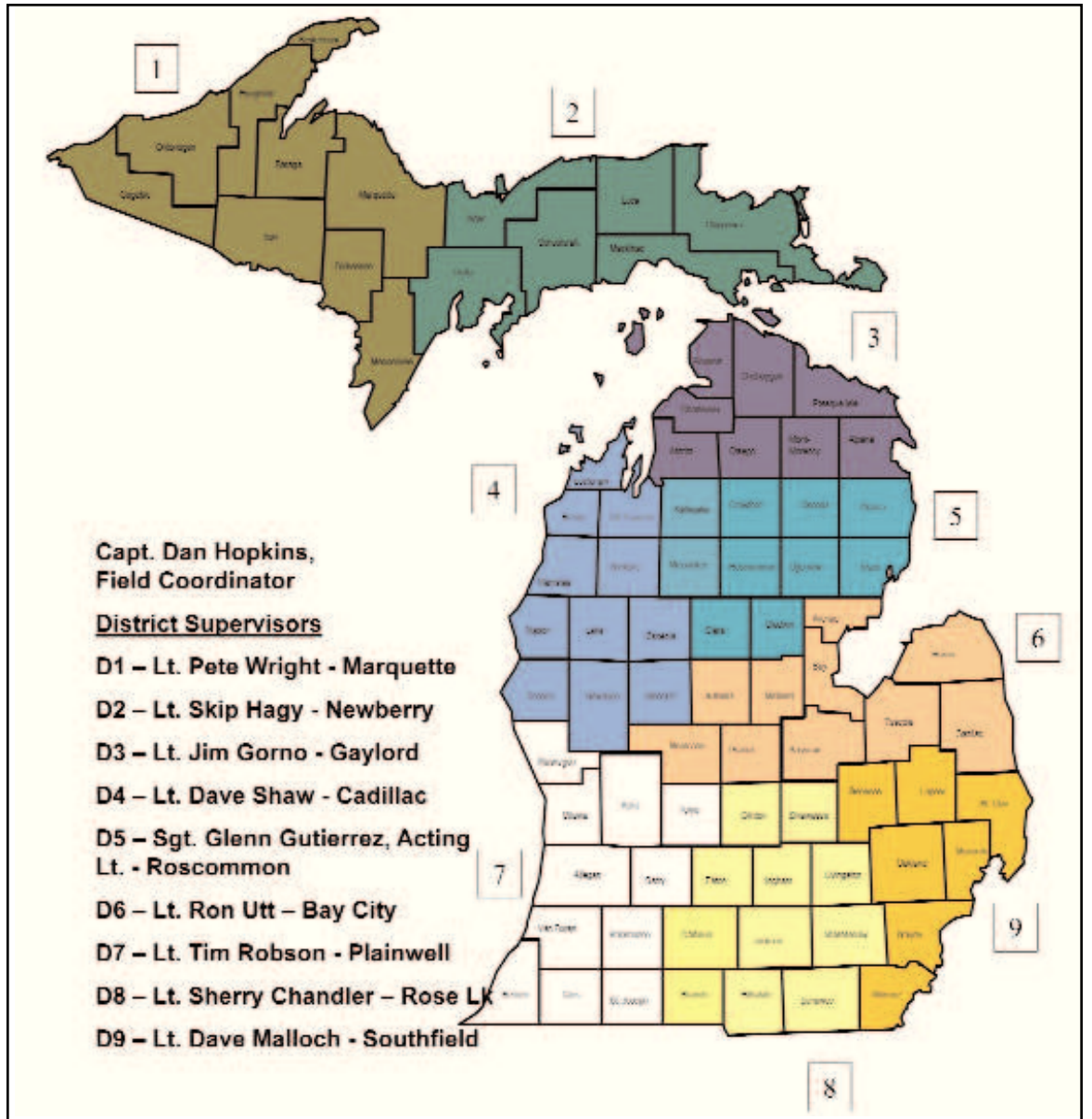
The study, in the journal *Climatic Change*, is one of the first to examine the influence of political orientation on perceived scientific agreement and support for government action to reduce emissions.

McCright and colleagues analyzed a Gallup survey of 1,024 adults who were asked about their views on climate change.

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Please join our efforts to keep readers fully informed about conservation and outdoor issues by providing us with news tips and/or photographs.

Send your tips, ideas and photos to: editor@mynorthwoodscall.com.



DNR Law Enforcement Districts

For those who aren't familiar with the various DNR Law Enforcement Districts referenced in the conservation officer log excerpts on Page 7, here is a map outlining their locations. While still not pinpointing exact locations, this may help give you a slightly better idea where the various reported incidents occur.



Eerie Lake Erie

—NASA Aqua satellite photo

With all its past pollution problems, Lake Erie is probably not foremost in the minds of many north country observers who are accustomed to the relatively pure waters of Lakes Superior, Huron and Michigan. But the neighboring Great Lake to the east needs consideration as officials try to decide what to do about noxious algae blooms that within the past couple of years have turned the blue waters green.

At its peak in 2011, the algae reportedly covered an area 2.5 times larger than that of any such Lake Erie bloom on record, according to a study by the Carnegie Institution for Science at Stanford University, published in early April of this year.

Several things are to blame for the problem, according to the researchers. Among them: increased use of fertilizer on agricultural fields surrounding the lake, earlier application of nutrients on bare ground with less tillage to work them into the soil, warmer temperatures in recent years and fertilizer run-off during heavy spring rains. Furthermore, a lack of strong winds during the 2011 bloom prevented the lake from being mixed up, a process that normally makes algae sink to the bottom and brings low-lying water to the surface.

In addition to being unsightly, algae blooms hurt fish by decaying and consuming massive amounts of oxygen and pose a threat to human health due to increased cyanobacteria known as Microcystis—a potent liver toxin. Invasive zebra mussels and quagga mussels have added to Lake Erie's troubles, because they tend to eat phytoplankton that live in the lake and compete with the cyanobacteria, officials said. Experts say the major algae bloom of 2011 is likely not unique and that more such events can be anticipated in the future unless something is done to reverse the trend, such as improved farming methods and dealing with the effects of a changing climate.

Conservation Officer Logs (4/15/13 through 4/28/13)***A tale of two bears, school scare, chain saw injury and nude canoeists*****DISTRICT 1**

CO Grant Emery was called to the scene of an overturned boat on the Montreal River in Gogebic County. Three subjects were in a small boat when it capsized in the strong current. The spring runoff has produced high water levels, and the subjects struggled to get to shore. CO Emery located one subject at a nearby residence and received directions on where to look for the other two subjects. The two wet subjects were located on the river bank and taken to the local hospital for treatment of hypothermia. The boat was lost in the swift current, and it was determined that no life jackets had been on board. The investigation is ongoing.

CO Grant Emery was called to the scene of an ORV that was swept out into the Montreal River near Lake Superior. CO Emery located the driver at the scene, and he stated he had driven his ORV into the river to wash it off. The swift current quickly washed his four wheeler from his control and down the river. It came to rest on the shore of an island, and with the assistance of a group of white water kayakers, a rope was secured to the ORV. Due to the strong currents, attempts to retrieve the ORV failed. The ORV was secured along the island and will be removed when the water levels retreat.

DISTRICT 2

CO Kevin Postma located an illegally baited turkey blind, and after working it for several days, he finally caught the individual hunting over the baited area. The subject showed a valid turkey kill tag and admitted that he knew it was against the law to hunt turkeys over bait. He took his ticket without complaint. Moments after the contact, the CO was speaking with other nearby turkey hunters who explained how they didn't have any luck, but their friend had shot a turkey the day before. This friend happened to be the subject that the CO had just issued a ticket to for the illegal bait. The CO went back to the location and received a full confession about the untagged turkey.

CO John Wenzel arrested two individuals for spearing walleye along the shore of Little Bay DeNoc. Eight walleye and two spears were seized.

DISTRICT 3

On Thursday night, **CO Carl VanderWall** received a complaint of a live bear in the bed of a pick-

up truck. COs VanderWall and Duane Budreau responded to Pellston and learned the subject had believed the bear was a road-kill and had picked it up while northbound on I-75 near West Branch. When he had gotten to Pellston to pick up his brother, the bear was observed sitting up in the bed of the truck. When the COs arrived, the bear was laying down and lethargic. The subject was ticketed for illegally possessing a bear and the bear was transferred to the CO's truck. The bear was then transported to an undisclosed wooded location, in hopes it would fully recover.

On Friday evening, **COs Matt Theunick** and **Eric Bottorff** responded to a complaint of a dead bear not far off a road. Prior to the CO's arrival, the caller stated he observed a vehicle pull over and load the bear into their truck. A license plate number was not obtained.

Later, near midnight on Friday, **CO Andrea Erratt** answered a complaint in which a subject stated he had picked up a dead bear from the location above and wanted to keep it. CO Erratt met the subject at his residence and explained it might have been possible if he would have called first, prior to picking up the bear. CO Erratt took the bear, and gave the subject a warning for possession of a road-kill bear without a permit. The bear was later identified as the same bear that had been picked up near West Branch the night before.

CO Andrea Erratt received a complaint about a teenage boy running through a yard carrying a backpack and then later running back up the driveway and through the yard with a rifle. The complainant said the boy was running back toward the Charlevoix Elementary School. CO Erratt responded and talked to the complainant, then walked through the woods, and talked to a neighbor who also saw two boys walking. CO Erratt located the father of one of the boys who said the three teenage boys were playing on the trails with BB guns. The dad said he was sleeping when they left and he could not say for sure that they just had BB guns. CO Erratt walked back to her patrol truck and talked to a sheriff's deputy, who explained the school had been put on lockdown, due to the nature of the complaint and proximity to the school. CO Erratt patrolled the area, walked the trails through the woods and dunes, and located the three boys who had two BB guns. The CO



warned one juvenile for trespassing; he apologized and said he understood how his lever-action BB gun could look like a rifle to someone not familiar with guns. CO Erratt telephoned all of the parents and explained what had been reported and that once contacted their boys had been respectful and cooperative.

DISTRICT 4

Sgt. Mike Bomay received a complaint from Ferris State University Public Safety in regard to a subject dumping gallons of gasoline into a sewer on campus. Sgt. Bomay contacted Lt. Wingate of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), who relayed information of the felony charges and penalties involved with dumping fuel into a water source. Enforcement action was taken.

Sgt. Mike Bomay and **CO Brian Lebel** were patrolling Federal Land when they came across an ORV operator with no helmet riding in a closed area. The ORV operator attempted to flee and struck a tree before coming to a stop. The ORV was unlicensed and the operator had an outstanding warrant for his arrest. The warrant was for a bull at large. The bull had gotten loose and wandered to a neighboring pool, where he drank from the pool before destroying it. Enforcement action was taken, including lodging the subject in the Mecosta County Jail.

COs Mike Wells and **Jeff Ginn** of Newaygo County were enforcing the Muskegon River access closures due to extreme flood conditions when they responded to a complaint that two canoes had launched from one of the closed access sites. The COs located a vehicle parked at the barricade with a note attached to the windshield reading, "We're just taking pictures." The COs were unable to locate the individuals on foot and were preparing to launch their vessel when they received a complaint that the two canoes had already capsized in the Muskegon River. The occupants were able to make it to shore safely and were issued a ticket for entering a closed area.

DISTRICT 5

COs John Huspen and **Chuck McPherson** assisted Crawford County deputies and EMTs with a subject who had badly cut his face and neck with a chain saw while cutting wood in an area inaccessible by emergency vehicles. The subject lost large amounts of blood and had to be taken out of

the woods on a backboard to a waiting ambulance. Officers were informed the following day that the subject had cut his carotid artery and is recovering in the hospital.

While checking state land, **CO Brian Olsen** observed two ORVs that were stuck in an area lake. Both subjects were wearing waders and their ORVs were equipped with 'snorkels' on their air breathers to allow them to operate in deep water. Both individuals were ticketed for their violations.

CO Jason McCullough responded to a complaint of a possible early turkey hunter the evening before the opener. Upon arrival, CO McCullough interviewed the suspect, who claimed he was not hunting but rather scouting for turkeys. There were some real flaws in the story including the fact that the suspect was dressed in a full "gilly" style camo suit and carrying a shotgun and turkey loads. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Mark Papineau and **Steve Lockwood** received a report of a 15-year old boy in full cardiac arrest on state land in Gladwin County. After a brief search of the area, Officers Lockwood and Papineau, along with paramedics, located the subject and immediately began CPR. The 15-year old boy and his father had been turkey hunting when the youth shot a turkey. A short time later, the boy collapsed to the ground and stopped breathing. The father immediately contacted 911 and began CPR. Despite best efforts, the boy was not able to be resuscitated.

DISTRICT 6

While patrolling the Tittabawassee River on the Walleye opener, **CO Dan Lee** and **Sgt. Ron Kimmerly** observed two anglers leave the shoreline as the COs were approaching. One of the anglers was carrying a stringer with one fish and the other had a bucket. The COs contacted the pair at their vehicles. There were six walleyes in the bucket, one over the limit. The man with the bucket, after realizing what the COs discovered, quickly told his friend with the stringer that he must have put a fish in the bucket. The man with the stringer, just as quickly, denied putting any fish in the bucket and left the COs to deal with the violator.

CO Ken Lowell checked anglers on the channels of a lake in Montcalm County looking for fishing violations. One angler on the channel saw the CO and dropped his fishing pole and pulled out his cell phone. When asked for his fishing license the angler acted like he was on an important phone call and began walking away. After a short walk it was determined that he did not have an important call, or a fishing license. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 7

CO Mike McGee received a complaint of two subjects turkey hunting while trespassing. CO

McGee was able to locate the subjects and issued them tickets for recreational trespass.

CO Mike Mshar responded to a complaint from the sheriff's department of a subject illegally netting steelhead in a parking lot along the Rabbit River after the recent flooding. The subject was witnessed performing the illegal act and having his dog retrieve the fish. CO Mshar also had a complaint in the same area of three subjects spearing steelhead in the same parking lot. When contact was made, it was determined that one of the subjects had been arrested for related illegal fishing practices in the past and one of the other subjects didn't have a fishing license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Mike Mshar responded to a complaint of a subject operating his vehicle illegally off road in the Allegan State Game Area (SGA). The subject was located and ticketed for operating illegally off road and for destroying vegetation, including numerous small trees.

DISTRICT 8

CO Todd Thorn swore out a felony warrant issued through the prosecutor's office against a man who was arrested by CO Thorn last fall who had a heroin needle in his pocket. The subject was jailed on a warrant during the incident, which resulted from a traffic stop where the man attempted to punch the female driver of the vehicle he was in. A warrant request was then submitted for the possession of heroin. The subject is being charged as a habitual offender. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 9

CO Todd Szyska received a tip from CO Kris Kiel that he received information of a subject fishing in Lottivue Canals that had over 100 crappies. After obtaining the information, CO Szyska responded and contacted two separate boats fishing the canal off of Lake St. Clair. The live well of the second boat was loaded with crappies. When asked, the subject stated he had 20. It was obvious to CO Szyska he was well over that. In the end, the subject was in possession of 44 crappies and four bluegill/sunfish for a total of 23 fish over his limit. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Ken Kovach received a complaint revolving around some nude disorderly canoeists trespassing on a private island. CO Kovach responded and while en route was updated that the subjects were three nude males. When CO Kovach arrived at the complainant's home, the subjects were placing their clothes back on and were getting in their canoes. CO Kovach caught up with the subjects on the next road crossing. Enforcement action was taken.

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Final Shot



The Road Less Traveled

One of our favorite places to get off the beaten path is the Seney National Wildlife Refuge in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. It's not always this traffic-free, but when it is—especially during the spring and fall—it's a great place to relax and view wildlife. A quiet bicycle ride through the preserve—complete with a picnic lunch—is particularly satisfying.

Infested tree species salvaged by DNR

State forests in Michigan are currently plagued by two invasive species that have the potential to significantly change the forest composition and further reduce the diversity of the tree species that have historically made up the state forest ecosystem.

Beech bark disease (BBD) was detected in 2000, according to Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) officials. It has been present throughout the eastern Upper Peninsula for several years and is now infesting forests in the northwest Lower Peninsula. While the majority of beech in a stand eventually become infected and die, the mortality from BBD can take several years, and there are a small number of trees that appear to have some resistance to the disease.

Emerald ash borer (EAB) was discovered in Michigan in 2002. It has spread through most of the Lower Peninsula and is now pres-

ent in a few locations in the Upper Peninsula. Once infected with EAB, ash mortality is rapid, with no resistance shown to date. Once signs of infestation are observed, there is approximately a two- to three-year window of opportunity where the timber can be harvested and used before the wood is no longer salvageable.

The DNR has been salvaging beech on state land in the eastern Upper Peninsula over the past several years, and is now beginning to salvage beech in the Lower Peninsula as the disease moves into those stands and mortality begins, according to Bill O'Neill, chief of the agency's Forest Resources Division.

"Because there is very little likelihood of any ash and very few beech surviving the infestations, the majority of those two species in the target areas are being removed," said O'Neill. "Care is being taken to ensure that

some trees are left to provide wildlife habitat, and any beech showing signs of possible resistance won't be harvested."

EAB had been primarily infesting and killing ash in the lower part of the state, but in the past year, there has been a significant increase in the spread of EAB into most areas of the Lower Peninsula, including some high-quality northern hardwood stands.

The DNR is preparing and selling the salvaged lumber to recover as much volume and value as possible in the next few years, officials said. For details: visit www.michigan.gov/foresthealth.

—Michigan DNR report

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Searching the canopy for Michigan's other red bird

By Doug Reeves

DNR Wildlife Assistant Chief

Most everyone is familiar with the northern cardinal—beautiful birds with definitive crests that are year-round residents of Michigan.

Yet there is another "red bird"—an even more vibrantly colored one—that also nests throughout Michigan.

The scarlet tanager is similar in size to a cardinal—maybe just a little smaller—but far fewer people recognize its song. Males of the species in breeding plumage are strikingly beautiful. They are bright red over their entire body—except their wings and tail are black. During the breeding season, they are more brightly colored than cardinals.

The song of the scarlet tanager has been described as like that of a robin with a sore throat. That is, there is a hoarseness, or "busyness" to the song, but otherwise it is somewhat similar (in cadence and range, at least) to the song of the American robin.

Some of my more memorable experiences with scarlet tanagers were during Boy Scout summer camp. Each year we traveled to Camp Rotary near Harrison, where we camped among large red and white oaks, big-tooth aspen and mature red maples—the kind of forest that scarlet tanagers prefer—and there were always several males singing around the camp.

I would mimic the song of a tanager and the male in that territory would come down out of the tree canopy to within 15 or 20 feet of us. For some scouts, it was their first real exposure to different kinds of life that are often close by, but not-so-often noticed.

Scarlet tanagers are birds of the tree canopy, where they hunt and feed on insects, make their nests, and spend most of their lives. They do not frequent bird feeders. As a result, it may require some searching to find a tanager to observe, even though they are quite plentiful.

Once the breeding season is over, male scarlet tanagers go



Scarlet tanager

through a molt and turn olive green like their mates. Although the males of many bird species take on a very different color following the breeding season, the transformation of male scarlet tanagers from brilliant red to olive green is more dramatic than most. After breeding season, it takes serious looking to find one.

Unlike cardinals, scarlet tanagers are migratory birds. They leave their nesting grounds in late summer and head for western South America, where they winter. They generally arrive back in Michigan during mid-May.

Several years ago, I visited the Tobico Marsh at Bay City State Recreation Area, where I walked the loop trail that goes through the woods to the west of the marsh. At one point, I climbed an observation tower adjacent to the trail, and as I stood on the platform, a male scarlet tanager lit on a limb less than 10 feet from me. What a rare treat! As far as I know, that is as close to a male scarlet tanager as I have ever been.

The woodland along that trail is still a good place to hear and see scarlet tanagers, along with many other bird species. Almost any forest with deciduous trees more than 35 feet tall will probably harbor scarlet tanagers during their nesting period.

It has been my experience that scarlet tanagers sing later into the morning than many other bird species, so you don't have to get up especially early to hear, or see them. So take a leisurely morning walk along a forest trail in late May or June. You might hear and see many interesting bird species—maybe even Michigan's other red bird.

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