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who love the north”**

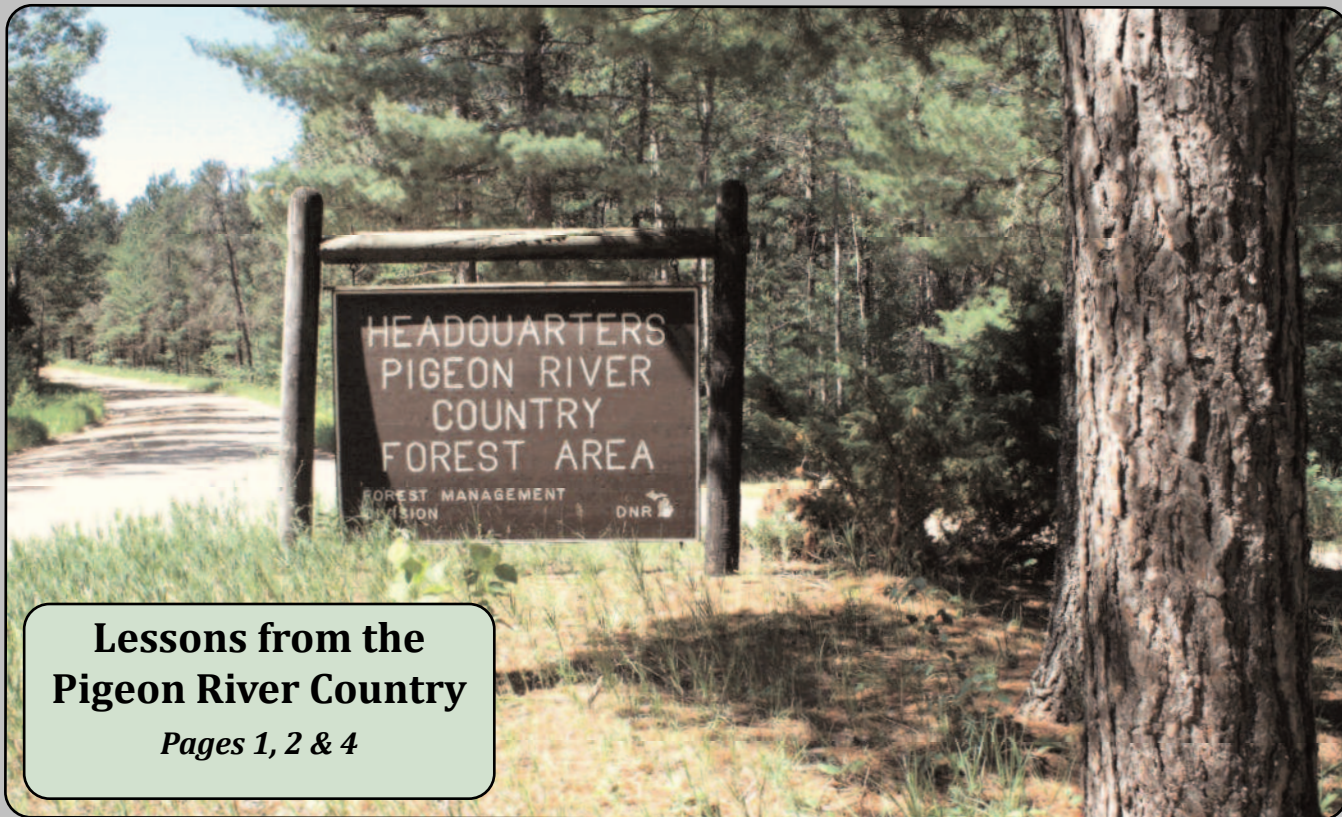


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Michigan's Conservation Sentinel Since 1953



**Lessons from the
Pigeon River Country**
Pages 1, 2 & 4

**Barry County Oil
Lease Lawsuit**
Page 1

**Tom Bailey
Talks Conservation**
Page 3

**Great Lakes: “Saudi
Arabia of Water”**
Page 5

**C. Troy Yoder
& Bob Strong**
Page 1

**CO Dave Rodgers
In Metro Michigan**
Page 3

**Toxic Wastes Near
the Platte River?**
Page 5

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North Woods Notes

AU SABLE RIVER CLEANUP: The 19th annual Au Sable River Cleanup is scheduled for September 7 at Gates Au Sable Lodge near Grayling. Volunteers are needed for the event, organized by Anglers of the Au Sable. It begins at 10 a.m. with a brief meeting and group picture, before cleanup teams head to various spots on the river at 10:15 a.m. The work will end around noon and participants are invited to the George Alexander Memorial Luncheon, where they can relax, and enjoy entertainment and food. If you're interested in helping out, please pre-register with Josh Greenberg at (989) 348-8462, or send him an e-mail at josh@gateslodge.com. Anglers of the Au Sable will also hold its annual meeting at 3 p.m. that same afternoon, while the group's board of directors will meet at 10 a.m. the following day, September 8.

MANISTEE RIVER CLEANUP: Volunteers are also being sought for the annual Manistee River Cleanup on Saturday, September 21. It begins at the Old Au Sable Fly Shop in Grayling. For more information, or to pre-register, contact Andy Partlo at andy@oldausable.com.

ELK VIEWING: To the possible consternation of some Pigeon River Country purists, three elk viewing stations were recently installed in the northeast Michigan forest to encourage "eco-tourism." Each station—built by students at the Cadillac Career Technical Center with help from Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation volunteers—has an information board with elk history, biological facts and management information, along with a map of other areas where elk may frequently be found. Elk in Michigan are specifically managed in an area of Otsego, Montmorency, Presque Isle and Cheboygan counties.

WILDERNESS PARK PLAN: The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is seeking public input into its new management plan for Wilderness State Park in Emmet County. An online survey—at www.surveymonkey.com/s/WildernessStatePark—is the first of several opportunities for citizens to be part of the planning process.

STOCKED UP: The Michigan DNR last spring stocked a total of 19,130,659 fish that weighed 664,338 pounds and consisted of eight different species and one hybrid. It took 394 stocking trips to 729 locations, with drivers traveling 106,235 miles in 2,648 hours using 17 specialized stocking trucks.

BEACH POLLUTION: The Associated Press reports that Michigan beach-goers lost 755 days of water access in 2012 because of pollution. That's down 17 percent from 2011, according to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and about half the number from five years earlier.

BOAT ACCESS CLOSURE CANCELED: Temporary closure of the boating access site at Vin Riper State Park in Marquette County has been canceled. The site was originally scheduled for work August 5-9, but the work will be rescheduled for a later time.

DREDGING CONTRACT: A \$473,366 contract has been awarded to BayShore Contractors LLC of Grand Rapids to dredge 24,500 cubic yards of material from Manistee Harbor. The material will be deposited south of the harbor in the near shore area for "beach nourishment." Coal, sand, salt and general cargo are regularly transported through the harbor.

ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSES: Applications for antlerless deer applications are on sale through August 15. Hunters can apply for a quota-limited license online at E-license, through any authorized license agent, or at a DNR customer service center. A non-refundable \$4 fee is charged at the time of the application. Drawing results will be posted beginning Sept. 5 at www.michigan.gov/huntdrawings. A total of 70,550 public land licenses will be available; 483,400 for private land.

(Continued on Page 2)

Department of Natural Resources loses two veteran retirees

This summer has brought news of the deaths of two noted Michigan conservationists—both retirees from the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Robert Strong, a longtime DNR game biologist, died June 15 in Alpena at the age of 87, while C. Troy Yoder, retired DNR Region 2 director, died June 21 in his Traverse City home at the age of 93.

Strong, a graduate of the University of Michigan with a degree in forestry, helped restore Michigan's moose population and bring elk back to the Pigeon River Country. During the course of his DNR career, he was stationed at West Branch, Sault Ste. Marie, Gaylord, Marquette and Lansing. He retired in 1981.

Strong was "a person who dedicated his lifetime to assisting the wild character of northern Michigan, according to Doug Mummert, a friend and fellow conservationist from Gaylord.

"Bob did not seek fame by way of political connection," Mummert said. "He managed and promoted the concept of doing what was right for the resource. His important involvement in using the Pigeon River Country as an example of how Ma Nature's plan

should be respected, has provided a foundation that was so necessary for the future."

An avid hunter and fisherman, Strong belonged to a number of conservation groups, including the Michigan Conservation Foundation, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ducks Unlimited and the Michigan Deer Hunters' Association. He also was very active in a variety of community organizations.

"His name and spirit will not be forgotten by those of us who benefited from Bob's conservation ethic," said Mummert.

Yoder joined the DNR in 1941 and served in a variety of positions before becoming Region 2 director at Roscommon in 1963. Among other things, he was district supervisor at Plainwell, regional supervisor of fisheries in Roscommon and state hatchery superintendent in Lansing.



C. Troy Yoder

Barry DNR lawsuit and the Pigeon River

A Barry County District Court judge is expected to issue a ruling within the next three weeks on a Michigan Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) request that a lawsuit brought against the agency by a Barry County citizens group be dismissed.

Judge Amy McDowell heard oral arguments in the case during a hearing on Monday, July 29. The hearing had been postponed from July 2 to July 26 to July 29, when attorneys representing the plaintiffs and the DNR were finally heard.

Michigan Land Air Water Defense (MLAWD) is seeking to nullify the sale of oil and gas leases in the Barry and Allegan State Game Areas—as well as in the Yankee Springs Recreation Area—because members say the land has previously been set aside for recreational uses under the public trust doctrine.

The suit was filed last October on behalf of MLAWD, but DNR attorneys told the judge that there is no genuine issue for trial because the lawsuit depends "on hypothetical future events which have not occurred and may not ever occur." Additionally, even

if these events should occur at some point in the future, they would be subject to a "well-established procedure" requiring a review and impact assessment by the Department of Environmental Quality, as well as public comment, the DNR said.

MLAWD, however, says the DNR failed to protect the greater public interest by selling the lease options.

About 60 people attended the July 29 hearing at the courthouse in downtown Hastings. Additional details will be shared in a future edition of *The Call*.

Lessons from the Pigeon River

The dispute is reminiscent of a major battle during the 1960s and 1970s between citizens, oil interests and the DNR in the Pigeon River Country northeast of Gaylord, which ultimately resulted in a Michigan Supreme Court ruling that nixed plans for oil drilling on state-owned land that was leased to oil companies by the DNR.

(Continued on Page 6)

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P.S. Lovejoy

Parrish Storrs Lovejoy, a former administrator of the Michigan Department of Conservation, is credited with originally creating what he called "The Big Wild"—the Pigeon River Country. In 1919, he began a drive to enlarge the state's land holdings in the area and insisted that the forest, lakes and streams be protected for future generations. "I'd like to see the Pigeon opened up to ensure really good fire protection and damn little more," Lovejoy reportedly said. "... so it isn't too damn easy for the beer-belly gents and nice old grandmas to get to, set on and leave their tin cans at. I figure that a whole lot of the side-road country should be left plenty bumpy and bushy—and some that you go in on foot, or don't go at all." He has been called Michigan's version of noted conservationist Aldo Leopold. The stone marker at left was placed in the picturesque woods—not far from the present-day forest headquarters—after Lovejoy's ashes were scattered nearby.

As Region 2 director, Yoder managed DNR activities in the northern half of the Lower Peninsula from 1963 until his retirement in 1981, and played key roles in establishing the white-tail doe hunting program and the replanting of trees to improve wildlife habitat.

A graduate of Michigan State



Robert Strong

University with a degree in zoology and wildlife biology, Yoder played a central management role in the state salmon restocking program, and was an important part of the successful planting of Coho salmon in 1966 and Chinook salmon in 1967.

He also managed the response to various ecological disasters in Michigan, including a messy oil well blowout that contaminated groundwater, the containment of the Fletcher fire in 1968 and the disposal of PBB-contaminated cattle in 1977.

Yoder loved Michigan and the outdoors. He hunted and fished throughout his life, and was happiest in the woods, or on a lake.

Family members and former colleagues say that Michigan is a better place because of Yoder's lifelong contributions to the state's natural environment.



Pumping the "Big Wild"

This oil well in the Pigeon River Country State Forest is a reminder of the fierce battle over drilling here that took place during the 1970s. Although a compromise allowing some limited drilling was eventually reached, conservationists still worry over future impacts of this and other activity on the Pigeon River, and other state-owned lands. (See historical column at right and Page 4 for more perspective).



North Woods Notes

(Continued from Page 1)

NRC MEETINGS: The next Michigan Natural Resources Commission meeting will be held August 8 at the Annis Water Resources Institute in the Lake Michigan Center, 740 West Shoreline Drive, Muskegon. The September 12, November 7 and December 12 meetings will be at the Michigan State University Diagnostic Center, 4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing. On October 10, commissioners will convene at a location yet to be determined in Iron Mountain. For more information about starting times and agendas, visit the Michigan Department of Natural Resources website at michigan.gov/dnr.

YOUTH JAMBOREE: Michigan's largest youth-centered outdoor recreation event—the Great Outdoors Youth Jamboree—will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, September 8, at Lake Hudson State Recreation Area in Lenawee County. The free event will feature more than 30 exhibitors providing hands-on displays and workshops. For more information, visit www.michiganpheasantsforever.org/youth.

DEMONSTRATION DAYS: The DNR has scheduled "demonstration days" for mentored youth hunters at its Pontiac (Aug. 6), Ortonville (Aug. 7), Sharonville (Aug. 13) and Rose Lake (Aug. 14) shooting ranges. To find out more about these events—which give young hunters a chance to meet with conservation officers, and try a variety of firearms, archery equipment and crossbows with help from range officers and hunter education instructors—visit www.michigan.gov/mentoredhunting. The events run from 4 to 8 p.m.

WOLF HUNTING: The Michigan Natural Resources Commission in July confirmed its support for Michigan wolf hunting by redesignating wolves and all other existing game species under the authorization provided by Public Act 21 of 2013. The board also reauthorized a limited wolf hunt for this fall under the new game designation.

PALISADES LEAKS: The Palisades Power Plant in southwestern Michigan's Covert Township has reportedly had two more contaminated water leaks since it shut down May 5 for more than a month to repair a leaking water storage tank, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Cause of the leaks was being investigated at this writing, but officials said there has been no impact on public health and safety.

CONSERVATIONISTS OF THE YEAR: Three Michigan DNR wildlife biologists have been honored by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) as conservationists of the year. Adam Bump, Brian Roell and Dean Beyer were feted for work they did to make this coming fall's first wolf-hunting season a possibility. Bump works out of Lansing as the DNR's fur bearer specialist. Roell, who works out of Marquette, is a wolf specialist. Beyer also works out of Marquette and is the state's leading researcher on predator-prey relations.

DRONE HUNTING: Just when you thought Michigan wolf hunting was controversial, a small western town is considering an ordinance that would create a license and bounty for hunters to shoot down government surveillance drones. Local resident Phillip Steel of Deer Trail, Colorado, reportedly drafted the "symbolic" ordinance, which will be considered by the town council on August 6. It calls for a \$25 drone hunting license and outlines "rules of engagement" for hunters looking to shoot down the unmanned aerial devices. "We do not want drones in town," Steel told a Denver television station. "They fly in town, they get shot down." According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Deer Trail's population was 559 in 2011. Steel said he had not yet seen a drone there.

Our 60th Year: Looking Back to August 12, 1970
— Excerpts from *The North Woods Call* —

A last chapter for the north woods

By Glen Sheppard

What's a man to do when his outsides get to gnawing at his insides, and his insides scream in their torment to be free to flee the roar and insanity that is outside?

When the hurry, stop, go, duck, turn, squeal, squawk, swoosh, hurry, hurry, go faster, slow down, watch out, ring, crash, it's getting late, watch that car, gets to glazing his eyes and his soul, what's a man to do?

Does he join the harried, frenzied, madness of the crowd that is pressing in on him? Does he let the outside turn his inside into a living tomb for his dead spirit?

Maybe. But, if he doesn't wait more than a few weeks, he can still find a place just northeast of Gaylord where his insides and his outside can find peace. Where there are no slamming doors. No roaring trucks. No squealing Mustang tires. No pushing, rushing, puffing people. No air that burns his nose and eyes.

It's a big, trackless land—by modern standards. A person can walk all day and never see a tire mark, or hear a truck. But there is life. Elk tracks abound. And there is pollution, of sorts. Watch your step, or your foot will be in a pile of elk droppings.

For shade and comfort and grandeur there are 100-year-old pine trees. For the elk and the deer there is also a mixture of aspen and hardwoods. There are raspberries, so sweet that a handful leaves the taste buds reeling. There are ferns, and fluorescent red and orange button mushrooms too pretty to step on.

But, more important, there are no people and there is no noise—unless an airplane intrudes from above.

There are signs, though, that man once stopped on this land. White pine stumps the size of a Volkswagen still mark the last time man did more than pass this way.

Since that time, 70 to 90 years ago, this land in the Pigeon River Country has been viewed by man as good for nothing but keeping the outside world out. A place to refresh and replenish harried spirits.

So wondrous a place that P.S. Lovejoy, Michigan's pioneer game chief, asked that his soul forever remain here. In admiration, friends placed a monument in the forest nearby to mark his grave.

But things are changing rapidly.

Ford Kellum, the state's game

chief for this quiet land, has put his 37-year career on the line to oppose the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) brass in Lansing who want to let the oil men bore their holes into the soul of the forest Lovejoy haunts.

Last week, Kellum learned that the oil men have won. They have been given permission to drill up to eight holes in every square section (640 acres) of land, including those roadless sections where man is now only a passing visitor.

Even in granting Shell Oil Co. authority to ravage this land, a top-ranking DNR executive in Ralph MacMullan's office pleaded, anonymously, with *Call* readers that someone sue the department to stop the oil drillers (using the new Environmental Protection Law—HB-3055—as a basis for the court suit).

But Ford Kellum can't rely on court suits. Last week he made what he fears could be his last visit to the Pigeon River Country before it becomes an oil field.

Kellum, DNR geologists say, is a radical. But they are not looking at the past 37 years and what Ford has seen happen. When he started as a game biologist at Casino Research Station in the Upper Peninsula (U.P.), wilderness was everywhere. When he moved to Crystal Falls as district wildlife chief a couple years later, there were more sections without roads in them than sections with roads.

By 1941, when he moved below the Straits—as manager of the Iosco Game Refuge—much of the land was still quiet and lonely. By 1945, when he became Mio's first district game chief, things were starting to change.

As he moved to Traverse City as district chief in 1947, rails, cabins, impoundments, oil wells, super highways—and people, noise, people, heavy air, people, and more noise—started to invade the wild areas. The wilds disappeared faster than he could write reports on them.

The move to Gaylord in 1964 wasn't to his liking, but it did put him back in a district with some undeveloped land in it—the big Pigeon River Country.

Kellum is a romantic. A naturalist. A lover of quiet, unmolested places. He feels all men should be. So last week he took Gary Bouschelle, a young game biologist, with him into the unviolated area of the Pigeon River Country.

Gary, who works for Kellum

out of the Atlanta field office, is one of the new breed. He has more of the book learning (that the anti-doe people despise) than his boss has. He is more articulate than the old-timers. He knows he can prove the facts of biology, so he isn't going to get up tight when someone is too thick-skulled to understand.

Bouschelle is also a dedicated young man. He started at Wayne State University to become a doctor, but he changed his mind. The big woods of the U.P. he had wandered as a boy drew him from the big city and the big checking accounts of an M.D. He decided to settle for the small checking account and the big woods of a game biologist.

As the state car turned up the Tin Shanty Bridge trail and then the Saw Dust Pile trail, Kellum openly cursed the oil trucks that he passed. Bouschelle said little. But, gradually, the second passenger in the car sensed the quiet anger that was festering in the gentle-faced young man.

The question kept floating around. Did Bouschelle feel sorry for the old man—the Game Division's environmental radical—because he was going to lose? Or did he, too, sense and feel the hurt, the frustration, in seeing this sanctuary for tired men gouged by oil men?

Once the car stopped, with no trail closer than a mile to the west, Gary Bouschelle showed the cut of his cloth. With his feet in the woods, he became a lover of the ferns, pines, elk tracks, ancient white pine stumps—the quiet! The nectar of the big woods flowed in his veins.

They walked west. Away from man. Away from noise. Away from slamming doors and speeding cars. Away from desks and clacking typewriters. Away from Eastern Standard Time and news-casts "every hour on the hour."

They walked into a world like it was when Ford Kellum signed on for his first assignment in 1933.

They walked into a world Gary Bouschelle—and P.S. Lovejoy's spirit—will never again see in the Pigeon River Country.

Ford Kellum no longer belongs in this country. Progress has passed him by.

The drillers will soon smash their way into this "no good" land to make a "good" land. Their pumps will suck the black slime the people in the cities need to make their insides hate their outsides.

Pipeline Rally

Several environmental activists converged on the Mackinac Bridge July 14 for an "Oil & Water Don't Mix" rally to call attention to aging oil pipelines under the Straits of Mackinac.

The pipelines, they say, leave the fresh water Great Lakes vulnerable to a serious oil spill.

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A conservation conversation with Tom Bailey

The *North Woods Call* periodically publishes insights from various conservation leaders and educators.

We ask each of them six questions about their own outdoor interests and the current needs of Michigan conservation.

Today we visit with **Tom Bailey, executive director of the Little Traverse Conservancy**, a Harbor Springs-based land trust that protects the natural and scenic character of northern Michigan.

A former National Park Service ranger and six-year employee of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Tom studied at Michigan State University, where he earned his bachelor's degree in Park and Recreation Resources, and pursued graduate studies in land use, resource economics and environmental law.

Where did you first develop an interest in conservation?

It started early. My father was an outdoorsman and worked as a wildlife biologist for what was then the Michigan Department of Conservation.

I remember campouts, fishing trips, hunting, shooting, and camping with my family around Michigan and across the country.

When I was still young, our family moved from Jackson, where my dad was district wildlife biologist, to Marquette, where he took on the regional biologist's job. I immediately grew to love the Upper Peninsula. The outdoors was definitely my first love.

How has that interest shaped your life's work?

My dad not only loved the outdoors, but worked to protect it. I guess I inherited that calling from him.

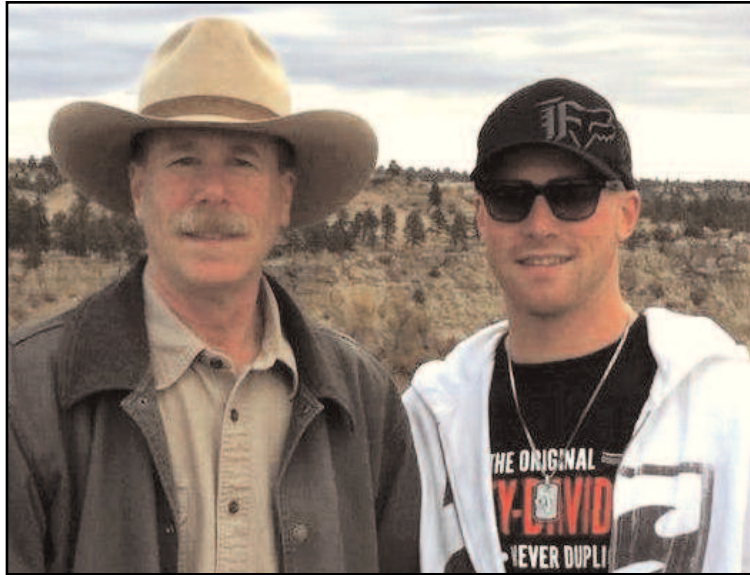
At age nine, I decided that I wanted to be a National Park ranger and, at 19, I realized that

dream as a seasonal ranger at Isle Royale National Park. Prior to that, I had worked with a citizens group developing a proposal to dedicate most of Isle Royale under the federal Wilderness Act of 1964. We also advocated for natural area and wilderness dedication in the U.P. under state law.

It always seemed to me that the most important aspect of conservation was keeping abundant areas of natural land close at hand for people to enjoy.

After my National Park Service days, I worked for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in Lansing for six years, administering grants for water pollution control and also regulating the hazardous waste business. But when the opportunity came to leave Lansing for the Petoskey area and the Little Traverse Conservancy, I jumped at the chance.

I had fallen in love with both this area and with my wife in the mid 1970s; we lived here for a year while she taught high school and I worked on an ill-fated mas-



Tom Bailey (left) and son John on the Yellowstone River in 2012.

ter's thesis. The opportunity to come back was a Godsend.

What do you believe are the three biggest conservation issues facing Michigan?

First is to reverse the institutional momentum of Manifest Destiny. By that I mean that the institutions that govern land—our legal, financial and even social attitudes—were all shaped in the 19th century with land seen as an unlimited commodity to be used. But we learned from people like Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot and Aldo Leopold that land is not so much a commodity to be consumed as a resource to be wisely managed. We can't afford to treat land in the same manner as we did in the 19th century.

Second, we need to break away from the "finders—keepers" atti-

tude toward natural resources and develop a Leopold-style stewardship ethic.

Regarding non-renewables, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund—conceived by Don Inman and created largely through the efforts of Howard Tanner, Tom Washington, Kerry Kammer and Bob Garner—is a great example. It ensures some of the financial benefits from these resources are passed on to future generations, not just squandered for short-term gains. This creates a legacy of parks and recreation areas that bring in tourists and attracts permanent residents—helping to build an enduring economy, rather than a winner-take-all bonus for a few exploiters of the land.

Third, we need to break the political gridlock in Lansing and Washington, and see that conser-

vation transcends partisan boundaries.

On one hand, conservation is by definition a conservative enterprise. Resources are capital, and any capitalist understands that you don't squander and deplete your capital. You manage it wisely and make it grow. The natural resources and beauty of Pure Michigan is the goose that is laying the proverbial golden eggs for the third-largest industry in our state: tourism.

But conservation is also a social good that resonates with political liberalism. It has to do with equal access to resources and a healthy environment for all. It's about quality of life for everyone who lives here, learns here, and works here. Conservation makes sense no matter what your political views.

How would you recommend that we deal with each of these issues?

Start with the governor's proposal to make Michigan "The Trails State," and ensure that every community—and especially every child—has trails that can safely take them to parks and open spaces where they can wander and breathe and enjoy. Richard Louv's book "Last Child in the Woods" demonstrates through modern research that children do better academically, socially and cognitively when they spend time outdoors. This is exactly what poet Walt Whitman

(Continued on Page 6)

Conservation law enforcement on the metro beat

By Doug Freeman

The Grand River churned brown and foamy after rushing over the Sixth Street Dam in downtown Grand Rapids. Water levels were higher than normal for mid-June, but nowhere near the record flood crests caused by this spring's phenomenally heavy (and devastating) rains.

District 7 Michigan Conservation Officer (CO) David Rodgers patrols this stretch of highly fishable water in the heart of a metropolitan area with a population edging toward a million people. He's been a CO since 1997.

Rodgers, who grew up near Sparta, is an enthusiastic duck hunter, and a certified firearms instructor. He attended Grand Rapids Junior College, where he switched from an electrical engineering curriculum to a course of study he found to be of greater interest—law enforcement. He says he's never regretted that decision.

I couldn't refuse an offer to accompany him on one of his Saturday shifts. We started in the heart of the city with a fast-paced hike over bridges and along the paved walkways which parallel both banks of the Grand River. People were on the river in moderate numbers, unfazed by the high humidity and occasional spatters of rain.

More than a dozen fishermen were contacted and checked for licenses and IDs. Rodgers also made sure everyone was observing legal "catch" rules. Only one

gentleman failed to produce a valid fishing document. He gave himself away by trying to leave the area just before Rodgers reached his fishing spot. A healthy but undersized smallmouth bass in his bucket was safely released back to the river and a citation was written.

As the foot patrol continued, we ran into a group of cub scouts and their leaders—Pack 3347 from Kentwood. They were on a hike of their own, and taking a break at one of the small riverside parks maintained by the city. Rodgers was asked if he'd mind giving a short talk to the scouts.

A husband and father of three, he gave an impromptu speech that held the cub scouts' rapt attention. After a lively question and answer session, we resumed our trek down the river.

"I think they were mainly interested in looking at my belt," Rodgers said with a grin, referring to the equipment belt holding his side-arm, Taser, mace, radio, and handcuffs. "I do enjoy talking with kids, especially when they ask you lots of questions."

We followed the river walk beneath tall buildings and behind parking lots. We saw gang graffiti, and a few people who appeared to be homeless, keeping to themselves and camping in a sheltered spot. Conservation officers receive training to help them recognize situations likely to be encountered in a big city. They're legally able to tackle any enforce-



Michigan Conservation Officer David Rodgers surveys anglers on a recent patrol in largely metropolitan Kent County.

ment issue in the state, but mainly keep their focus on resource-related actions.

As we walked, Rodgers' experienced eyes soon located a cast net, complete with floats, stashed in thick brush beside the pavement. Hoop nets, usually with long ropes, are legal and often essential fish retrieval devices in urban settings, where the best places to fish are usually from bridges or high river walls. Cast nets, which are simply thrown into the current, anchored and eventually pulled back in, are illegal in most cases. This particular net was rendered unusable and disposed of quickly, as no owner stepped forward to claim it.

Types of fish observed in just a couple of hours on the Grand River: large and smallmouth bass, rock bass, bluegills, blue catfish,

and something resembling (and locally called) a shad. The river also holds pike, walleye, suckers, perch, trout, and even sturgeon, among other species, not to mention the salmon which migrate upriver in large numbers and can be seen leaping the fish ladders in late summer and early fall.

Next, we climbed aboard the officer's well-equipped, state-issued Chevrolet Silverado and headed toward some of the outlying city parks to check on activities there, stopping at critical points to allow Rodgers to scan the river with binoculars. Chances are, if a CO suddenly appears at your side, he or she has watched you from a distance for quite awhile. There isn't much point in denying any wrongdoing—they already know what

you've been up to.

Activity in the other parks was slow. The few people who were fishing presented licenses in good order. The water was murky, and all boat and fishing docks were under water. Only the tops of a few wooden support posts were visible.

Rodgers mentioned one of his more unusual fishing cases: Two men were observed last fall at the mouth of Indian Mill Creek, a designated trout stream, where it flows into the Grand River. They deviated slightly from standard fishing technique.

One man stood in the water clubbing salmon with a nine iron, while the other snagged the dead and stunned fish with a homemade gaff consisting of a large treble hook attached to the end of a broomstick. The violators were so enthralled over the success of their salmon-catching operation that they were yelling back and forth while laughing loudly at their own antics. All laughter ceased when they noticed Rodgers beckoning them. Serious enforcement measures were taken.

Our next stop was Millennium Park, some 1,500 acres of rolling hills, meadows, woodland trails and gravel pit lakes. Sold below market value to Kent County by the gravel pit's former owner/operators, the park is a popular outdoor destination for the entire metro area.

(Continued on Page 7)

Opinion

Conservation Quote

"I'd drive a thousand miles just to learn how to conserve gas and help save the environment. But that's just who I am."

—Jarod Kintz

Of people and climate change

Here's something sure to irritate those who swoon over carbon taxes and plead for ever more U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations. But it has to be said.

The President of the United States recently declared war on climate change—especially coal-fired power plants—and signaled that he would prosecute that war with executive orders and bureaucratic decrees. To heck with Congress, or anyone else who belongs to the "Flat Earth Society" and isn't smart enough to know that human activity is the primary cause of this "crisis."

The simple fact that many politicians, scientists and environmentalists know this "inconvenient truth" is apparently enough for them to force even the most draconian and costly actions on society to correct the problem.

Never mind that some other scientists disagree with these conclusions, and that a large portion of the population isn't yet "enlightened" enough to understand that fossil fuels and industrial activities will soon render the earth uninhabitable.

And never mind that the nation is broke, or that many of its hard-working citizens are unemployed and financially stressed.

More taxes, more spending and more government mandates are the remedies for all our woes, they seem to believe.

We've said before that we don't know how to sort through all the conflicting testimony in this matter. If the climate is indeed changing—and there's some short-term evidence, at least, that suggests it may be—what is the real cause?

The president and Al Gore, among others, tell us unequivocally that it's our fault. We drive too much, manufacture too much and generally live beyond what a finite earth can sustain. Maybe so.

But why should we believe THEM? After all, they're politicians and they've demonstrated repeatedly that they routinely lie about almost everything.

If this is such an urgent matter that requires the emergency subversion of our representative republic to correct, why does the president seem to be in the air more than he is on the ground—burning hundreds of thousands of gallons of high-octane jet fuel during never-ending campaign and vacation trips? Why doesn't he and other advocates of global warming and climate change model the behavior they demand that we adopt?

The same question might be posed to members of often left-leaning and self-righteous environmental groups, who seem to drive, fly and consume fossil fuels as much as anyone else.

We don't claim to be Nobel Prize-winning climatologists. Nor do we claim—as so many others do—to know the absolute truth about this contentious issue. But we think it deserves a more honest, serious and much less politically influenced conversation.

The way forward, in our opinion, is for those who embrace the notion of man-made climate change to offer clear and easily understandable arguments—backed by verifiable science—that will convince the naysayers of the validity of their position.

As it is today, there's way too much mocking and demonizing of those who prefer a more careful examination of such evidence—pro and con—before agreeing to further line the pockets of politicians, crony capitalists and bureaucrats who seem to be much more interested in themselves than in saving the world.

Powering up—sans fossil fuels

As the world debates climate change and contemplates ways to reduce the use of fossil fuels, President Obama says he wants to spend \$7 billion to bring electrical power to rural Africa.

The president, of course, is not talking about coal-fired power plants, but rather developing new sources of clean energy to benefit those who currently live off the power grid.

This is a worthy goal, although one wonders if we yet have the technology—or money—to accomplish it without fossil fuels.

Energy use has jumped exponentially around the world as people everywhere plug in, turn on, and demand even more of the electronic devices and 21st Century conveniences that eat energy like hungry wolves. The world's population has grown by leaps and bounds. Air and automobile travel are at record levels. And consumer goods and agricultural projects are being shipped to even more distant markets.

One idea that has been floated by the president's team is a soccer ball that generates electricity when kids kick it around, storing up energy for later uses, such as powering home light bulbs, or charging phones. Ideas like this may be a testament to mankind's ingenuity, but are we really going to electrify the world and meet our growing energy needs with such inventions?

Excuse our skepticism, but maybe this is just one more way to launder U.S. tax dollars for other purposes—such as special-interest payoffs and perpetual political campaigns.

Whatever the motivation—noble or otherwise—we probably have a long way to go before we solve the fossil fuel problem.

Back to school in the Pigeon River Country

I returned to school in mid-July, but it wasn't the typical classroom setting with textbooks and a course syllabus.

This was experiential learning and hands-on tutoring in the Pigeon River Country, located near Vanderbilt in Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula.

The "professor" was Gaylord-area resident Doug Mummert, a seasoned woodsman, hunter and fisherman. Doug and his wife Judy had invited me to their home to talk natural resources conservation—a subject about which they are as passionate as anybody I've ever known.

The discussion began as soon as I arrived Thursday afternoon at their secluded home southeast of town. It continued over dinner and well into the evening, then resumed early the following morning during a hearty breakfast that Judy had prepared.

There was much to learn about the Pigeon River Country—one of the more remote areas in the Lower Peninsula—and the Mummerts generously shared their knowledge and wisdom until I reluctantly drove away at 4:30 p.m. Friday to return home.

The highlight of this crash course in all things Pigeon was a day-long tour of the state forest known as "The Big Wild"—nearly 100,000 acres of trees, wetlands, hills, meadows, rivers, streams, lakes, trails, wildlife and solitude set aside for preservation and the public benefit.

Home to some of author Ernest Hemingway's favorite Michigan rivers—the Sturgeon, the Black and the Pigeon—the area has been Doug Mummert's "sandbox" and all-season playground for some 60 years, he said. Since the early 1950s—when Mummert first visited as a teen-ager—he has hunted, fished, snowshoed, canoed, hiked, ran hound dogs, communed with "Ma Nature," and generally absorbed the quiet and healthy spirit of the land.

That's precisely why he is determined to see it protected from developers, big oil interests, politicians, bureaucrats and others

Music review: *Whispers of the North*

Few singer-songwriters personify the north country better than Gordon Lightfoot.

The popular Canadian musician's 1976 song, "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald" and numerous other well-crafted offerings over a 50-plus-year career reflect the character of the Great Lakes region, its people and its landscape.

We have seen the 75-year-old troubadour perform at least seven times over the decades, interviewed him once, and even attended a backstage party with him and his band several years ago.

Needless to say, we have always enjoyed Lightfoot's music and the images it creates.

Now comes "Whispers of the North," a Mackinaw City band that recently brought its Lightfoot tribute show to a local bandshell near our home. And what a fine performance it was.

Headed by lead vocalist Mike Fornes, who plays the part of

North Woods Journal

By Mike VanBuren



who would exploit the resource for temporary and short-term advantage.

The threats have been many and varied over the years and Mummert has been among those in the trenches who have fought long and hard against exploitation.

One of the biggest threats came during the 1970s, when fuel shortages were causing long lines at gas pumps, and oil companies were eager to tap huge reserves of oil and natural gas under the forest. Opponents claimed that oil drilling activity would harm the Pigeon River Country's abundant wildlife—particularly the only substantial wild elk herd east of the Mississippi River.

For nearly 10 years, the two sides engaged in a series of lawsuits, consent orders, legislation and compromises until a 1979 landmark Michigan Supreme Court case offered guidance on the type of harm that would justify relief under the Michigan Environmental Protection Act and led to an agreement between the state government, oil industry and environmental groups. The ruling allowed tightly regulated drilling in the southern one-third of the forest under the watchful eye of the Pigeon River Advisory Council and set standards for future oil drilling in Michigan.

Today, the forest is a special management unit in parts of four counties that is administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) under a unique "Concept of Management" that carefully outlines what is allowed and what is not. Given that, the Pigeon River Country should be a model for resource conservation.

But there are still many threats, Mummert said, including conflicts among user groups, ongoing pressure to commercialize state natural resources and the continued deterioration of Michigan's

Lightfoot, the band offered a credible rendition of a Lightfoot concert and covered a wide range of memorable selections from the prolific songwriter's pen.

While Fornes may lack the soulful grit in Lightfoot's voice, he enunciates the lyrics more clearly and did a fine job delivering the songs. And, if we didn't know better, we might think it was Lightfoot's actual band backing him.

Yes, they were that good.

Fornes—an author and somewhat of an authority on the Straits of Mackinac and related lore—told several stories between songs that added color and general interest to the performance.

If you are a fan of Lightfoot's music, we recommend you check out Whispers of the North the next time they're in your area.

Oh, and Lightfoot is still out there on the road, too, so you might want to attend one of his concerts while there's still time.

once-vaunted "conservation system" in favor of political interests.

"We're losing our conservation system," Mummert said. "It seems like the legislature wants to run it, rather than the DNR, and they're catering to special and commercial interests."

Pure water will soon be our most precious natural resource, Mummert said, if it isn't already. Northern Michigan and the Pigeon River Country are great examples of that, he said, and act as somewhat of a "sponge" to collect and filter fresh water.

"Everyone should agree that it's proper to have pure water," Mummert said, and no activities should be allowed that threaten that—including the quest for more oil and gas resources.

In addition, wildlife is an indicator of a healthy environment. "If we manage for the most sensitive creatures out there, everything else will benefit, too," Mummert said.

That means you can't be all things to all people, he said. Some user activities—dirt bikes, four-wheelers, snowmobiles and other "fast movers"—have much greater impact on the resource than others. They need to be carefully managed—even prohibited—because smaller individual footprints mean better and more long-term resource protection.

Viewing the forest panorama from Inspiration Point above the old Civilian Conservation Corps camp in the Pigeon River Country, Mummert quietly reflected on past efforts to save the forest.

"What we're looking at now is here because of what we did before," he said.

A DNR official once told Mummert that he had destroyed his credibility by saying "no to everything." Yet, Mummert doesn't consider himself to be a "preservationist," and even chaffs at the label "environmentalist."

"I'm a traditionalist," he said, "and a conservationist. You have to believe in something and center your life around it. Otherwise, you won't do it."

That's a good lesson for us all.

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Letter to the Editor

Pigeon River history and today's fracking

Mike,

It's very interesting to read in all public articles the involvement of commercial activities that are being planned for state-owned lands. Yours and mine?

For those of us that use and are privileged to be able to hunt, fish and gain knowledge on them, there sure seems to be a swing in how natural resources should be managed (oil, gas, timber, guiding elk, bear, trout, mushrooms, etc.).

Fortunately, there are some citizens who can relate to the 1970s and 80s, when then-Gov. Milliken placed a moratorium on oil and gas development on 92,000 acres in a place called the Pigeon [River]. He and Helen [Milliken] took the time to spend a day with "grassroots-taught" people, listening and observing about prime wildlife habitat.

[The governor] could relate to the value and necessity of the pure water that was established by the character instituted by "Ma Nature."

After much political pressure, the Michigan Supreme Court wrote that, yes, our conservation system employees did indeed have the authority to deny the right to drill—even if [a company] held the lease rights. It was the charge of the system to protect and stop any degradation, or impairment to the surface waters in their districts.

This issue having to do with "fracking" is revealing what the conservation system is NOT doing. Yet, if a state Supreme Court decision does hold any power, you would think the efforts put forth by the coalition (which included the West Michigan Environmental Council and the Pigeon River Country Association) would reveal the inept people that should be protecting our natural resources.

It's evident that money influences decision making and it's becoming more evident that Department [of Natural Resources] personnel are accommodating special interests when we, as citizens, expect them to do what is right for the resource.

It all boils down to "jobs come first." Their jobs?

Commercial exploiters have it figured out and they have used so-called environmental leaders to assist their needs.

Mike, I'm only writing this letter to challenge you to find out the facts of the ruling by the state Supreme Court. I believe Judge Brown has his name on some of the reference [materials] and I'm sure there are some lawyers still around that worked on our behalf to accomplish these [things].

It might be a friendly way to assist the folks that have concern about the amount of fresh water used to "frack."

Fresh water that the Great

Lakes provide for our type will be the most valuable resource within 50 years. It's very close to that now.

Doug Mummert
Gaylord

Doug,

Yes, it's ironic—and not a small bit troubling—that those charged with protecting natural resources seem to sometimes surrender that responsibility in favor of commercial/political interests.

And these are the very same "science-based" experts that many environmentalists today say should have unquestioned authority to make all decisions about managing such resources—regardless of what citizens demand.

There definitely are parallels between what happened in the Pigeon River State Forest and what is happening around controversial "fracking" activities elsewhere.

I have the late Gordon Charles' book on "The Big Wild," and am familiar with the battle that you reference and the subsequent Supreme Court decision. In fact, I have revisited the book to see what it has to teach about today's struggle and the Michigan Environmental Protection Act (See story that begins on Page 1).

Thanks for the reminder.

—Mike

Reader Comment

DNR should protect "above ground" resources—not strip mining interests

EDITOR'S NOTE: Below is the response to a previous letter sent to the author from William F. Moritz, natural resources deputy at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Moritz's letter—published in the Late March edition of *The North Woods Call*—defended the DNR's leasing of land for a proposed limestone quarry in the Upper Peninsula's Lake Superior State Forest.

Dear Dr. Moritz:

Thank you for taking the time to respond to my letter and addressing my concerns regarding this strip mine. Unfortunately, your comments did little to reassure me and others that the DNR has the best interests of our natural resources at heart.

One of the primary functions of the DNR is to protect and manage the "above ground" natural resources (ie. vegetation, wildlife, wetlands and forests) that lie within OUR public lands. In your letter you stated, "... we need to assess the balance of a need for natural resources products, like limestone, to be used for roads, steelmaking and many other products..." I don't believe it is the responsibility of the DNR to be concerned with the marketability of a "below ground" resource—rather, the focus should be on managing what lies above.

This strip mine, as well as Senate Bill 78 (bio-diversity bill) are a direct assault on these "above ground" natural resources. The DNR is truly the last defense against these permanently destructive policies.

In addition, you also stated, "As with all land transaction proposals that the DNR receives, the proposal will be reviewed with great attention and detail to assess whether it conforms to state law, DNR policies and procedures, and if it is in the best interest of the state."

The best interest of the state? What about what is in the best interest of those of us who enjoy the use of open public lands for hunting, camping and other outdoor activities? A strip mine permanently destroys these opportunities.

After reading your letter, I feel as though the DNR has taken a "neutral" position on this mine, as well as Senate Bill 78. This makes no sense. As a friend of mine at the DNR stated, "... when are we [at the DNR] going to grow a spine and take a stand on something?" If the DNR refuses to take a position and defend OUR public lands, then who will?

It seems as though we never learn from past mistakes. Back in the early 1900s, Michigan's forest land was virtually destroyed by excessive logging and massive fires. Eventually, someone finally figured out that this was not the best future for Michigan's wilderness areas and a conservation movement was born. However, it now seems as though we are choosing to ignore the past and are trending toward a different—yet more destructive—path that will leave permanent scars on the Michigan landscape.

Fortunately, excessive logging and forest fires are not permanently destructive and Michigan was able to recover. The same cannot be said about a strip mine.

Regardless of what any mining company may claim, there is no "restoration" of the land. Proof of this can be seen by the several smaller existing strip mines that dot the area today. These mines have remained unchanged for decades and look as they did when they were first implemented. Also, the land around them has since recovered and has become very diverse. So, with that in mind, further permanent destruction of this land is completely unacceptable.

The mining company's claim of redistributing topsoil upon completion of the mining process is—at the very least—misleading. Once the topsoil is removed and stacked, much of it will be lost. Ten thousand years of topsoil development—gone. Additionally, given the low topography of the region and the depth of a strip mine, there is a strong probability that we will be left with nothing but a stagnant, mosquito-breeding muck hole.

In conclusion, I believe that the mining company will continue to use propaganda techniques in an attempt to make this mine sound as least invasive as possible. I trust that the DNR will ignore these tactics and maintain sound conservation practices that will ensure the future of Michigan's public lands for generations to come.

When the mining company presents its final proposal, I hope that the DNR will take a stand and defend our "above ground" natural resources, and not succumb to the false claims and promises from the mining company or politicians.

Thank you for our time. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this issue.

David Gorenflo
Traverse City, Michigan

Party time for 90-year-old Pete Petoskey

By John Gunnell

Merrill "Pete" Petoskey, retired Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife Division chief, was feted June 29 by more than 200 friends at The Garlands near Lewiston.

The occasion: Petoskey's 90th birthday.

Master of Ceremonies Jim Hilgendorf also announced the establishment of an endowed scholarship in Petoskey's name at the Michigan State University School of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Petoskey's past accomplishments in conservation and outdoor parlance confirmed once again his exalted and much-respected status among those present at the event. The atmosphere, according to friend Doug Mummert of Gaylord, was "high and happy spirited."

Characteristically Pete, the honoree answered the gentle barbs of the roasters with his own brand of grace and humor. Like so many past gatherings with Petoskey present, his folksiness and charisma were in good form at the special commemorative tribute.

Treasured by friends and admired by many others for a lifetime of accomplishment was what the birthday celebration was all about. Those present felt privileged to be in his midst, knowing full well that Petoskey is no less distinguished when he dines alone. When he spoke, they felt the deep conviction of this man who became an outdoor icon long ago.

Punctuated by his exemplary service with the DNR, Petoskey still today epitomizes the same

steadfast enthusiasm for protecting Michigan's natural resources. Historically, he was the moving force behind establishing environmental goals that reach well beyond Michigan. He caused standards to be set for protection and enforcement that fly in the face of today's appeasement practices.

Petoskey became "Joe Commoner's" strongest advocate for listening to the little guy, who so much needs to feel represented today. His unwillingness to acquiesce to special interest politics is well documented and—among other issues—contributed to his unfortunate early departure from the DNR.

After a short stint with the U.S. Wildlife Department, Pete later returned to the Michigan DNR for the remainder of his illustrious career.

Fortunately for Michigan, it appears we will once again be hearing more from Pete Petoskey on the outdoor issues of today, according to those making efforts to arrange for his involvement. Several party guests also expressed unsolicited support for Petoskey's voice to be heard by Michigan citizens and current DNR leadership.

You can donate to the Merrill "Pete" Petoskey Endowed Scholarship Fund by sending your tax-deductible contribution to Ms. Raietta Ott, 2254 South County Road 489, Lewiston, Michigan 49756. Make checks payable to Michigan State University. You will receive an acknowledgment letter and status update.

"The Saudi Arabia of water"

The Great Lakes region will take on a more important role in food production as water shortages become more severe in other parts of the world, according to a recent article in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

The region has been described

as "the Saudi Arabia of water," because water is becoming more valuable than oil in some parts of the world, said writer Tom Henry.

All the more important, then, to carefully manage and conserve water resources, the article says, as well as the region's farmland.

Anti-fracking group says oil and gas wastes dumped at Platte River Estuary

Ban Michigan Fracking, a grassroots group dedicated to banning hydraulic fracturing in Michigan, says toxic wastes were dumped recently on roads within the Platte River watershed.

A Benzie County resident reportedly saw an oil services company truck spreading liquid wastes on a county road. The substance

had an "obnoxious odor" and an "oily sheen," the witness said, and—according to subsequent lab tests conducted by the local road commission—contained benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes.

It was not immediately known whether the material was an approved "brine" allowed on roads.

The Natural World

By Richard Schinkel



Blueberry time in Michigan

I was first introduced to Michigan's wild blueberries as a kid visiting our cabin in the Upper Peninsula.

Behind the cabin was a sphagnum bog and we would go out there and pick the "huckleberries" for the cereal and pie my mother would make.

Everyone is aware that Michigan is one of the top producers of blueberries in the United States, but doesn't even rank next to the wild blueberry production of Maine.

In Maine, the plants grow very close to the ground—similar to cranberries—and are harvested by machine. The blueberries we found in the bog were black and shiny and we called them huckleberries. They actually were just a variety of bog blueberries. A true huckleberry, by scientific denoting, is almost inedible.

In Michigan, we have two basic types of blueberries. The first that makes up most of our cultivar crops is the highbush blueberry. Normally, these bushes live in rather moist areas and like an acid type soil. Often these are found in the acidic bogs of the north that are made by the scouring of the glaciers with little or no water outlet, resulting in bog habitat. These bogs are rich in plant diversity, with many orchids, sundew, leather leaf and pitcher plants.

The highbush blueberry grows from four to eight feet tall. The other blueberry is the lowbush variety and it has numerous names. One that is found in the sandy soils of our forests is often called the barren ground blueberry, as the soil doesn't allow a large number or size of berries. It can be associated with bracken fern. The lowbush varieties in the marsh or bog situations produce more and larger berries. The bog types of lowbush blueberries are most common in the Upper Peninsula and northern parts of the state. The highbush wild varieties are more common south. Many people feel the wild blueberries are superior in taste to the domestic blueberries.

Blueberries are one of the few cultivated native plants of North America and now hundreds of cultivar varieties exist that can provide a season of berries from mid-July into September.

Blueberries are unique in that they tolerate a variety of habitats, but are most happy in wet, well drained, acidic soils. Native Americans were the first to encourage the growth of blueberries by burning bog lands periodically to encourage growth.

The Upper Peninsula community of Paradise holds a blueberry festival every August and it has become a part of its local heritage. Programs include music, nature, local history and, of course, all kinds of blueberry treats.

Lately, a few articles have come out about the "new" type of blueberry that grows on a tree or larger shrub. The fruit does look like a blueberry, but in reality it is just a variety of service berry, also called Juneberry. These can also be found throughout the forests of Michigan and provide tasty fruits, but the wild ones don't produce a lot of fruit and birds really like them.

The service berry is a wonderful tree/shrub and can enhance your local yard or habitat. A whole host of cultivars have been developed to provide the correct height and shape of service berry. The tree/shrub has beautiful early white spring flowers and the fall leaves are also very colorful.

While on your mid summer fishing excursion, look for those wonderful berries and even put them in a pie or pancakes. Northern wild blueberries are wonderful!

Tell others about the North Woods Call

Barry County lawsuit reminiscent of Pigeon River battle

Continued from Page 1

After years of fighting oil development in the wilderness area, citizens went to court in 1976 after the state Natural Resources Commission (NRC) went against the wishes of then-Gov. William G. Milliken and approved "environmentally acceptable" drilling there. The NRC did so without specifying where, when, or how much drilling could take place, leaving those decisions up to negotiations between the DNR, oil companies holding leases and the Michigan Attorney General's office.

Several citizen-based environmental groups—including the Pigeon River Country Association, West Michigan Environmental Action Council, Trout Unlimited, Sierra Club and Michigan Nature Association—challenged the NRC's decision in Ingham County Circuit Court on the grounds that its agreement with the oil companies was illegal and violated provisions in both the Michigan Environmental Protection Act and the state's Oil and Gas Act. The Michigan United Conservation Clubs, on the other

hand, supported the drilling.

An Ingham County judge declined to issue a blanket ban on drilling, but did rule that the NRC's lease agreements with the oil companies did not themselves authorize drilling. All drilling permits would be subject to review, the judge said, to prove that the activity would not cause any environmental damage. In addition, citizens would have the right to contest any permits.

More legal wrangling occurred during the coming months and, despite strong objections from its field employees, the DNR issued at least one controversial drilling permit and approved Shell Oil applications for ten exploratory wells.

Shell began exploratory drilling, but the Michigan Supreme Court—acting on an emergency appeal—ordered the company not to clear any new sites or sink any new wells in the Pigeon River Country. The high court agreed to hear the case, even though it was still pending before the state Court of Appeals.

Finally, on Feb. 20, 1979, the Supreme

A conservation conversation: Tom Bailey

(Continued from Page 3)

wrote back in the 1860s, that "the secret of making the best persons is to grow in the open air, and to eat and sleep with the Earth."

We also need to protect the Natural Resources Trust Fund, and consider similar measures to ensure that future generations will not be impoverished by the exploitation of limited resources today. Last year, I understand there was a new program created in the U.P. to ensure that some money generated by mining is banked to benefit local governments and local people in the future, after the mines close and the minerals are sold and gone. This sort of thing makes sense.

Regarding the whole attitude toward land, it's an evolutionary process. Anywhere in this country, if you have some land to develop, you'll get all kinds of help. There are many subsidies and "incentives" to exploit the land. But these are leftovers of a bygone era.

As witnessed by a whole list of "developments" that went bust after the 2008 downturn, the balance has been artificially skewed to favor development and this has not proven to be all that wise. We need to end subsidies that had their roots in the 19th century and take a more balanced approach, with development paying its own way.

There was a time when it was important to protect civilization from the ravages of the wild, but now it's more important to protect what's left of the wild from the ravages of civilization.

What are the barriers to solving these problems?

In land and resource issues, it's primarily government policies that made sense in years past, but are no longer appropriate for the times—given what we've learned about natural resources and economics. We need to give natural

resources their proper place as capital, not as commodities.

Regarding the importance of people getting outdoors and enjoying nature, we need to pay attention to the people like Richard Louv and Walt Whitman, and spend time outside. If you don't want to take the poet's word for it, take the professor's. Study after study shows that it's good for us. Hospital patients with a scenic view recover more quickly and completely than others. There's no question about it. But we need to get away from our computers, shut off our "mobile devices" and just enjoy being outdoors.

Who are your personal conservation "heroes" and why?

My dad tops the list. He was a great father and a great conservationist who laid the groundwork for re-establishing moose in the Upper Peninsula and was the first leader of the wolf recovery team, envisioning the return of the wolf to more of its former range. (Incidentally, he saw the day when population management would be called for as a victory for wolf recovery, not a defeat). He taught me about the outdoors, about conservation and about life. He fought for his country during World War Two in the greatest air-sea battle in history at Okinawa, yet there was a gentleness and kindness in him that I still strive to emulate. He was a remarkable man.

There were many others along the way—including his colleagues in the DNR like Pete Petoskey, Dave Jenkins, Ralph MacMullan; Don Inman, of course—and some younger guys like Jim Hammill, and others. I owe a lot to Doug Scott, formerly of the Wilderness Society, and Walt Pomeroy, who ran the Michigan Student Environmental Confederation, for teaching me about grassroots ac-

tivism for conservation and for showing me what it means to make that quantum leap from saying "somebody should do something about that" to "I am going to do something about that."

I've had great mentors at Little Traverse Conservancy: Dave Irish, who was one of the founders and was board chair when I was hired; Horace M. "Huffy" Huffman, who taught me about running an organization; and C.S. Winston, Jr., who taught me lessons he learned about responsibility—not only through his great career in the advertising business, but also as PT boat commander in World War Two. My staff members at the Conservancy today are conservation heroes, too—they do the work that makes all the difference.

Going way back, I love reading Theodore Roosevelt, John Muir and Aldo Leopold. I was once privileged to spend part of an afternoon in the Leopold Shack with his daughter, Nina. It was like a pilgrimage to a great shrine.

My most recent hero, though, is my son. I watched him grow from a kid to a leader—from an adolescent who pushed the limits to a soldier who stood up for his country, endured the strains of war, and came back to take up once again with his love of hunting, fishing, and being outdoors. He was there with me holding his mother's hand when she died and, rather than giving in to self pity, he has lifted himself up.

Among the rites of passage that we go through as parents, perhaps the most amazing is when you suddenly look at your "child" and realize that this is not a little person to nurture, but a man to genuinely respect and admire. He's got another year or so to finish up at Central Michigan University with a double major in biology and environmental policy, so that should tell you something about

Save the Trees

The Little Traverse Conservancy will host its 24th annual fundraising event Aug. 7 at The Boat-house in Harbor Springs. Among the goals is to raise \$70,000 to help purchase a parcel along M-119 to be set aside as the John Fischer Preserve.



law behind them."

Court ruled against any exploratory drilling in the Pigeon River Country because of the environmental damage it would cause. And, in a related case, the high court held that state laws enacted in 1921 and 1939 granted the DNR power to deny drilling permits in any cases in which the Pigeon River Country's unique wilderness environment would be threatened by the development.

The twin rulings had the effect of prohibiting oil and gas drilling throughout the entire Pigeon River Country State Forest.

Dr. Joseph Sax, a University of Michigan law professor who wrote the Michigan Environmental Protection Act and consulted on the Pigeon River Country legal challenges, said at the time that the case was important because it "demonstrates something that needs to be demonstrated over and over again; that ordinary citizens—people without a lot of expertise, without a lot of political influence, who scrimp and save for every dollar—can win despite enormous odds if they have the determination, the conviction that they're right, and they have the

Lawsuits over environmental issues are always a matter of last resort, Sax said, but "when those who are supposed to administer the law—in this case the DNR and the Natural Resources Commission—do not do the job that they ought to do," and when other institutions (like the press, governor's office, or citizen opinion) "are unable to bring about much-needed change," then "we as citizens have no choice but to go to court."

Every effort to convince the DNR and NRC to make the right decision, only pushed them further into a corner, Sax said. "They persuaded themselves not only that they made the right decision, but that they ought to fight as hard as they could to sustain that decision. And they did."

Historical information in this article was gleaned from the late Gordon Charles' 1985 book on the subject—"Pigeon River Country: The Big Wild."

Conservation Officer Logs (6/24/13 through 7/7/13)**Filthy campsite, topless bridesmaid, repeat poacher & a drunken juvenile****DISTRICT 1 (Marquette)**

CO Trey Luce was patrolling along Deer Lake in Ishpeming. A subject stopped CO Luce and told him several young men were fishing on the back side of the lake. CO Luce located six subjects standing around a fire in a remote part of the lake. Despite being classified as a "No bait, catch and release only" lake, the subjects were fishing with live bait and were cooking freshly caught fish over their campfire. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Doug Hermanson received a complaint of unregistered campers that left a big mess at Big Lake State Forest Campground. Upon arrival, all campers were gone from the scene, but they left numerous items behind. Follow-up investigation led to three of the campers being ticketed for litter. CO Hermanson is still attempting to contact other subjects from the same campsite. Numerous violations included failure to register a campsite, operating a truck on the beach and no recreation passport.

DISTRICT 2 (Newberry)

CO Mike Evink ticketed a subject who had dumped household garbage on state land. CO Evink confirmed the suspect's identity from paperwork found in the pile. One piece of paperwork had the suspect's social security number on it. CO Evink also suggested that the suspect be more careful with such personal identity information.

CO Robert Crisp, along with other area officers, conducted a group patrol on a local river that generates a lot of complaints revolving around disorderly canoeists, kayakers and tubers. A large number of people were participating in the event during the holiday weekend with only a few causing problems. One event in-

involved a bridal party canoeing down the river. One member of the bridal party thought it a good idea to wear a very small child's PFD instead of her swimsuit top. A few minutes later she decided to remove the personal flotation device. With many families and kids in the area, CO Crisp advised her to put her top back on. She objected, as did the rest of the bridal party, and relayed that she had no intention of putting it back on. They then attempted to paddle away. After they were stopped, they began to sober up and were ultimately charged with failing to stop on command, rather than indecent exposure.

DISTRICT 3 (Gaylord)

After receiving several complaints about a subject on Lake Charlevoix pulling logs off the bottomland and selling them, **CO Andrea Erratt** was finally able to catch the subject towing a salvaged log. Charges are pending review by the prosecutor.

COs Duane Budreau and Carl VanderWall received a complaint in Bay Harbor regarding a subject shooting geese with a paint ball gun. The subject stated he was sick of the mess the geese made and hadn't received any help from the DNR. After some discussion, it was learned he had never attempted to get any help. The subject had shot and wounded two goslings then finished them off by shooting them with the paint ball gun approximately 20 times. He was charged with taking geese during the closed season.

CO Kelly Ross reports a commercial timber producer pled guilty to cutting on state lands and paid \$8,800 in restitution to the state.

DISTRICT 4 (Cadillac)

COs Steve Converse and Sam

Koscinski received a tip that a subject wanted on DNR warrants from a 2008 deer violation case was possibly camping in Wexford County. Shortly after the illegal deer warrants were issued in 2008, the subject moved to Arizona and has been a fugitive ever since. The COs were able to locate the subject and arrested him on the warrants. The subject was lodged in the county jail.

CO Rich Stowe responded to a complaint from a landowner who reported hearing a gunshot on his property. The landowner investigated and located a subject chasing down a wild turkey he had just shot with a .22 cal. rifle. The landowner escorted the subject off the property and photographed the license plate from the suspect's vehicle. CO Stowe recovered the dead turkey and ran the license plate. CO Stowe was very familiar with the suspect, as he was one of the subjects arrested last fall in Grand Traverse County for the night shooting of a black bear and several bucks just for their antlers. An interview led to a full confession to the turkey poaching. Warrants are being sought for taking a wild turkey during the closed season, taking a turkey with a rifle, hunting while his hunting privileges were revoked and recreational trespass.

**DISTRICT 5 (Roscommon)**

CO Jason McCullough assisted local agencies in Clare County with an air evacuation of a subject who was injured while sliding headfirst down a sand hill into the Muskegon River. After coming out of the water, the subject reported being unable to feel his legs.

CO Brian Olsen assisted local law enforcement agencies in Ogemaw County in a search for a 12 year old boy who had gone missing on his bicycle. After an all-night search, the missing boy was found intoxicated the following morning at the scene of a party.

DISTRICT 6 (Bay City)

CO Larn Strawn was called to an environmental complaint at a local cemetery. Upon arriving and investigating, the CO discovered two subjects had driven into the back of the cemetery and dumped an entire 55 gallon drum of used motor oil onto the ground. The subjects were confronted by the cemetery groundskeepers and fled the scene, almost running down the groundskeeper with their vehicle. The groundskeeper was able to give a detailed description of the suspects. Anyone with information about this incident is urged to call the Report-All-Poaching (RAP) hotline.

DISTRICT 7 (Plainwell)

CO Chris Holmes reports the disposition of a case that he had investigated earlier in the year. The subject pled guilty to multiple counts of trapping and hunting without a license. The subject was ordered to pay over \$4,000 in restitution to the state fish and game fund for illegally taking fur bearing animals and small game species without a license in 2012.

CO David Rodgers, along with an intern, stopped to watch seven persons fishing along the

Grand River near Grand Rapids. As the intern maintained watch, CO Rodgers stepped into view and all anglers walked away from their fishing rods. At the conclusion of the investigation, five adults were ticketed for fishing without licenses; and two stringers containing six short bass, two undersized catfish and small sheephead were located along the bank. One person had been ticketed by the CO in the past, two subjects had prison records and all had officer safety caution alerts.

DISTRICT 8 (Rose Lake)

After receiving several complaints regarding subjects mud bogging, **CO Dan Bigger** contacted a subject who had just crossed the road and began tearing up the land adjacent to the river. CO Bigger was able to position his truck in a fashion that was not noticed by the violator until he turned a corner in front of some deep mud holes. The subject saw CO Bigger and put the truck in reverse only to find himself buried and unable to continue. CO Bigger contacted the subject and enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 9 (Southfield)

CO Mark Ennett was dispatched to the location where a drowning victim was found. Three days earlier the victim, an adult male, dove into the water to retrieve a child who had fallen into the lake. The child was wearing a life jacket and was recovered, but the male was not. The victim was finally spotted offshore and the local fire department responded, located the victim, and brought him to shore. CO Ennett assisted in securing the scene with the fire department and members of the sheriff's department until the person could be identified.

Conservation law enforcement on the metro beat with CO Rodgers

(Continued from Page 3)

We climbed to the top of a hill where Rodgers could view the shoreline of Lake Leota with his binoculars. Two fishermen at the far end of the lake were soon chatting pleasantly with us after being approached and showing valid licenses.

We then traveled further into the less-urbanized areas of Kent and Ionia Counties, hitting fishing spots along the Thornapple and Flat rivers. Collapsed banks and torn-up trees were clear evidence of the recent flooding.

A young man casting a line below the dam in Lowell was found to be without a license. Having just turned 17, he was reminded of his legal obligation by Officer Rodgers and sent to the hardware store to purchase one in order to avoid a citation.

"I try not to use too much of a heavy hand," Rodgers said. "I do what I think is most likely to encourage a person's future law-abiding behavior."

We didn't wait for the youth to return. We were on our way to the Lowell State Game Area, where someone was illegally driving an off-road pickup—a "mudder." We stopped briefly at an informal shooting range deep in the woods where off-roaders like to congregate and where trash is frequently dumped. If caught, incidentally, a person trashing state land may be granted the option of picking up all the garbage on-site and disposing of it properly at their own

expense. Such action may result in a less punitive appearance in any one of the six court systems Rodgers reports to.

A ripped-up two-track and a number of destroyed saplings put us on a fresh trail in the game area. The CO's four-by-four Silverado negotiated ruts that would've wrecked a lesser vehicle.

After a half-hour's slow and bumpy drive, we arrived at a metal gate, property of the State of Michigan. The gate was badly bent and nearly pushed over. The maniacal mudder was gone, to Rodger's chagrin. "I'll catch those guys," he said quietly. I believe he will.

Our last patrol stop of the day was initiated by two vehicles parked near a bridge spanning the Flat River. Using a quiet approach, we climbed down a steep concrete and fieldstone embankment beneath the bridge, then moved "low and slow" along a brushy river path. With one smooth arm movement, Officer Rodgers let me know I needed to crouch and stay out of sight of a family group picnicking across the river. The people he was watching were just ahead on our side.

Stealth, high-powered binoculars, and a dark olive drab uniform help COs get into position for sudden enforcement. Being in excellent physical condition doesn't hurt, either. The three gentlemen standing on a mucky, grassy projection of the bank were totally unaware of our presence as they ad-

mired a full stringer of fish. Rodgers could clearly see a number of undersized bass through his field glasses.

As happened several times during that shift, we paused in heavy foliage long enough for hordes of mosquitoes to puncture us repeatedly. No matter. The fishermen were enjoying a few cold ones when we strode into view. Their heavy stringer of fish was immediately flung into the tall grass and the men resumed positions of relaxation.

On questioning, none of the guys could present a fishing license. They said they'd just started fishing and hadn't yet caught anything. Rodgers asked them to remain seated on the ground as he foraged through the grass. In minutes, he was counting illegally taken fish, not only on the stringer, but also in a plastic shopping bag found nearby—25 in total, including ten undersized smallmouth bass. And not a fishing license in the group. A lengthy process of examining driver's licenses and checking for outstanding warrants began. An awkward half-hour passed as we all remained in place and Rodgers communicated with state and local police agencies.

The men were finally cleared for warrants, but will face major fishing violations in the form of individual citations and future court dates. Depending on the judge, fines and court costs would likely cost them hundreds of dollars apiece. Still, the men were

cooperative—they seemed to accept their situation with stoic resignation.

Having been out of water too long, the dying fish were confiscated and would later be photographed for evidence. We climbed back up the embankment knowing the Flat River was missing some bass that could've grown into a sportsman's trophy catch.

Officer Rodgers has that combination of affable good nature coupled with no-nonsense firmness that seems to characterize most the conservation officers I've run into in this state. As we headed back to the car pool lot where my vehicle was parked, I asked if COs had to take specific training in public relations. Rodgers chuckled, indicating they usually weren't. Just a personable bunch, I guess.

Fewer than 130 COs are currently in the field in Michigan, Rodgers said—a small number to police 60,000-plus square miles of land and adjoining Great Lakes waters. A bill that at this writing was before our state legislature restructures fish and game license fees, and should result in enough revenue to beef-up a number of important environmental programs, including the hiring of thirty to forty additional conservation officers.

Whether patrolling in city or country, on the water, or deep in the northern forests, they're sorely needed and many hunters and anglers believe it's well worth the slightly higher cost of hunting and fishing licenses.

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Final Shot



Oden Oasis

A good place to stop and rest while traveling on the sometimes congested two lanes of U.S. 31 in Emmet County this summer is the Michigan Fisheries Visitor Center. Located north of the highway on the east edge of Oden, the center has a variety of exhibits about Michigan Department of Natural Resources' efforts to manage the state's fisheries resources—including a replica of a fish transportation rail car. Tours of the nearby Oden State Fish Hatchery are also available by reservation.

Marketplace of the North

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EPA plans more regs

The Environmental Protection Agency is reportedly planning many new environmental regulations that go far beyond the President Obama's plans to issue new standards for greenhouse gas emissions from new and existing power plants.

The new regulations will cover everything from pollution runoff from military ships to landfill methane emissions. In addition, they would regulate new refrigerants used in automobile air conditioners, update standards for grain elevators and renew an effort to change disposals of pharmaceuticals considered to be hazardous waste.

Now that's a woodpecker!

By Doug Reeves

DNR Wildlife Assistant Chief

A crow-sized bird lit on the specially made suet feeder, a flash of white on its otherwise dark wings. A closer look revealed a long beak, bright red crest on the head and a mostly white neck and throat—a pileated woodpecker.

When you see your first pileated woodpecker, your thought might well be, "Now that is a serious woodpecker!" Michigan's other woodpeckers are substantially smaller, starting with the downy and working up through the hairy, red-headed, black-backed and red-bellied woodpeckers—and also including the migratory yellow-bellied sapsucker and northern flicker.

Over the years several people have insisted to me that they have seen ivory-billed woodpeckers in Michigan. Ivory-billed woodpeckers never did nest in Michigan, and if they still exist at all, anywhere, they are extremely rare. There is no doubt that our birds are pileateds.

Woodpeckers are primary cavity nesters, meaning they carve out the holes that they nest and roost in. When they are done with the holes, other birds—the secondary cavity nesters—use the holes. Birds such as chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, house wrens, eastern bluebirds, tree swallows and great-crested flycatchers build their nests in on the holes the smaller woodpeckers make. In the case of pileated woodpeckers, the cavities they create are mostly used by wood ducks, screech owls, American kestrels and hooded mergansers, along with various squirrels, mice and other wildlife.

Woodpeckers feed by burrowing into or under the bark of trees, and sometimes into the wood of the tree to get insects and insect larvae. Pileated woodpeckers—with their long beaks—create holes, frequently rectangular in shape, some of which are 4-5 inches deep and a foot or more long.

In northern Michigan, the signature pileated woodpecker indicator is a white cedar tree with



Pileated woodpecker

rectangular excavations carved into it. In those cases, the woodpeckers are seeking out carpenter ants and their larvae in the heart of the tree. But pileated woodpeckers are not particular about the type of tree they carve. In the southern Lower Peninsula, where white cedars are rare to nonexistent, their activity seems most evident in decayed aspen, dead ash, basswood and silver maple trees, but it is not unusual to find evidence of their activity in pin oak, white pine, or any other tree that has become occupied by insects.

Frequently, a pile of wood chips at the base of a tree is the first indication that you should look up and see what the woodpeckers have done. I never cease to be amazed what a woodpecker can do with its beak. Even after reading about the mechanisms that protect their heads from damage, I find it incredible.

Pileated woodpeckers live in places where trees have grown to a relatively large size. They were rare in Michigan following the logging era, but as forests have grown and aged, their population has greatly increased.

Moments after spotting the woodpecker that began this story, a second and then a third pileated woodpecker showed up in adjacent trees. Except at a nest where the babies had their heads sticking out of a nest hole, I had not seen three of those big woodpeckers together in one place. That was a noteworthy sighting and another pleasant interlude with Michigan's amazing wildlife!



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