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 Grayling Chamber of Commerce Memorial Legion Hall, where they can relax, and enjoy food and entertainment. 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@gatesauable.com. Anglers of the Au Sable will also hold its annual Public Land/License Day from 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 parish, 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 habitat, legal facts and management information. With a map of other areas where elk may frequently be found. Elk in Michigan are specifically managed in an area of Oscego, 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 stock 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 5-6, 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 24,300 cubic yards of material from Manistee Harbor. The material will be deposited to BayShore Contractors LLC of Grand Rapids to dredge 24,500 cubic yards of material from Manistee Harbor. The material will be deposited to BayShore Contractors LLC of Grand Rapids to dredge 24,500 cubic yards of material from Manistee Harbor.

ANTLERLESS DEER LICENSES: Applications for antlerless deer applications are on sale through August 15. Hunters can apply for a quota-licensed 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/huntdraws. A total of 70,550 public land licenses will be available; 483,400 for private land.

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 97, 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 reduce the Manistee’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 Man Nature’s plan should be respected, has provided a foundation that was so necessary for the future.”

As a career 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.

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 deer hunting program and the planting of trees to improve wildlife habitat.

A graduate of Michigan State University with a degree in zoology and wildlife biology, Yoder played a central management role in developing the state’s elk restoration 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 it was a better place because of Yoder’s lifelong contributions to the state’s natural environment.

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 will rule on 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 licenses in the Barry and Allegan State White 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 never occur.” Additionally, even if these events should occur at some point in the future, they would be subject to “a well-recognized 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 of Gaylord. Which ultimately resulted in a Michigan Supreme Court ruling that nullified plans for oil drilling on state-owned land that was leased to oil companies by the DNR.

(Continued on Page 6)
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, sneak, squat, squawk, honey, hurry, go faster, slow down, watch out, ring, crash, it’s getting late, watch that car, get to glazing his eyes and his soul, isn’t the right way.

Does he join the harried, frenzied, madness of the crowd that is pressing in on him? Does he let the outside turn hisinside into a living tomb for his dead spirit? Maybe. But, if he doesn’t want 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, pulling, pushing. 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 tree mark, or hear a truck. But there is life. Elk bunches. 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 mosses and plants that have that handful-ful taste the burning tides replace. 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 is now only a passing visitor. The move to Gaylord in 1964, so 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—it visit www.michigan.gov/hunting. 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 the Atlanta field office, is one of the new breed. He has more of the book learning (that anti-deer people despise) than his boss has. He is more articu-

late 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 sknell-skullered to understand.

Bouschelle is also a dedicated young man. He started at Wayne State University to become a doc-
tor, but he changed his mind. The big woods of the U.P. he had wan-
dered as a boy drew him to the big city and the big checking ac-
ings of an M.D. He decided to settle for the small checking ac-
count and the big woods of a game biologist.

The state car turned up the Tin Shanty Bridge trail and then the Saw Dust Pile trail, Kellum opened cursed the oil trucks that he passed. Bouschelle gave it a passing glance. But, gradually, the second pas-
senger in the car sensed the quiet anger that was festering in the gentle man as he moved through the oil field.

The question kept floating around. Did Bouschelle feel sorry for the old man—the Game Division’s environmental radi-

cal—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 men. Away from noise. Away from slamming down speed-

ing cars. Away from desks and clacking typewriters. Away from Eastern Standard Time and news-

casts, “cell phones.” They walked into a world like it was when Ford Kellum signed his first assignment in 1931. The. 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 progress will, they hope, make the people in the cities need to make their insides hate their out-

sides.

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.)
A conservation conversation with Tom Bailey

Tom Bailey (left) and son John on the Yellowstone River in 2012. First is to reverse the institutional momentum of Manifest Destiny. Before that I mean the institutions that fund land—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” attitude toward natural resources and develop a Leopold-style stewardship ethic. Regarding non-renewables, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund—conceived by Don Inman river also holds pike, walleye, forts of Howard Tannier, Tom Washington, Kerry Kammer and Bob Garner—a great example. It ensures some of the financial benefits from these resources are passed on to future generations, not just squandered for short terms. These gains create a legacy for parks and recreation areas that bring in tourists and attracts per- manent residents—helping to build an enduring economy rather than a winner-take-all bonus for a few exploiters of the land.

Tom Bailey believes the three biggest conservation issues facing Michigan are, first, to reverse the institutional momentum of Manifest Destiny. By that I mean the institutions that fund land—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” attitude toward natural resources and develop a Leopold-style stewardship ethic. Regarding non-renewables, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund—conceived by Don Inman river also holds pike, walleye, forts of Howard Tannier, Tom Washington, Kerry Kammer and Bob Garner—a great example. It ensures some of the financial benefits from these resources are passed on to future generations, not just squandered for short terms.

A conservation law enforcement on the metro beat

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Conservation law enforcement on the metro beat
I returned to school in mid-July, but it wasn’t the typical classroom setting with textbooks and a course syllabus.  

This was an experimental learning and hands-on experience.  

As a part of the Pigeon River County, located near Vanderbilt in Michigan’s northern Lower Peninsula.  

Tom Mystick was a Gaylord-area resident Doug Mummert, a seasoned woodman, hunter and fisherman. Doug and his wife Judy are now employed by the DNR to talk natural resources conservation—a subject about which they feel very passionate as anybody I’ve ever known.  

The discussion began as soon as I arrived Thursday afternoon at their secluded home south 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 Lower Peninsula, particularly about the areas that the Mummerts generously shared their knowledge. One of the topics I returned late at dusk at 4:30 AM. Friday morning.  

The highlight of this crash course was the exploration of a day-long tour of state forest known as “The Big Wild”—nearly 100,000 acres of wetlands, hills, meadows, rivers, streams, lakes, trails, wildlife and solitude set aside for preservation in the state’s interest.  

Home to some author Ernest Hemingway’s favorite Michigan river, 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 teenager—he has hunted, fished, snowshoed, canoed and camped. “I was always communing with Ma Nature,” and generally absorbed the quiet and intimate images it creates.  

As it is today, there’s way too much mocking and demonizing of those who prefer a more careful examination of such evidences. They might want to attend one of his upcoming concerts while there’s still time.  

Many user activities—dirt bikes, four-wheelers, snowmobiles and other things—have had a 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 the drop-off at 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 every developer,” and that Mummert didn’t consider himself to be a “preservationist,” and even chaffs at the label. “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 all.  

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**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.”

— Jareol Kintz

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**Music review: Whispers of the North**


The song’s chorus, “Forts des Nuns-a-pluie (a fresh wind),” has become a beloved and enduring folk song. It is a testament to the enduring power of music and its ability to inspire and connect people.  

Lightfoot’s music has continued to inspire and connect people, and it is fitting that his music is being celebrated in this way. The song’s message of hope and resilience resonates with people around the world, and it is a testament to the enduring power of music and its ability to inspire and connect people.  

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**Back to school in the Pigeon River Country**

North Woods Journal

By Mike VanBuren
NoTHE NORTH WOODS CALL Early August 2013 Page 5

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. For those of you that use and are privileged to be able to hunt, fish and gain knowledge on them, there is a need to know 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. Miliken placed a moratorium on oil and gas development on 92,000 acres in a place called the Pigeon River. He and Helen [Miliken] took the time to spend a day with “grassroots-tea” people, listening and asking about prime wildlife habitat.

[The governor] could relate to the value and necessity of the pure water that is contained by the land protected by the character by molded as “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 the land from any degradation, or impairment to the surface waters in their districts.

This issue having to do with “fracking” is revealing that the conservation system is NOT doing. Yet, if a state Supreme Court decision does hold any weight, you would think the courts would put forth by the coalition (which included the West Michigan Environmental Council and the Pigeon River Country Coalition) 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 Gowan should pay more attention to 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 waters used to “frack.”

Fresh water that the Great Lakes provide for our type will be the most valuable resource for the next 50 years. It’s very close to that now.

Doug Mummert
Gaylord

Doug, Yes, it’s ironic—and not a small bit ironic. If so-called environmental leaders 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 commercial “fracking” activities.

I have the late Gordon Charles’ book “On The Big Wild,” and am familiar with the 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 3).

Thanks for the reminder. —Mike

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 80th birthday. Merrill’s accomplishments and activism 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 paraphernalia are extensive and could fill any page, among those present at the event. The atmosphere, according to friend Doug Mummert of Gaylord, was “high and happy spirited.”

Interestingly, Petoskey’s son answered the gentle barbs of the roasters with his own brand of grace and humor. Like so many past gatherings with Petoskey present, his jokes, charity and charisma were in good form at the special commemorative tribute.

Treasured by friends and admired by many others, everyone had a story or anecdote of affection for what the birthday celebration was all about. Those present felt privileged to be in his midst, knowing full well that Petoskey is no less dirname to the man. 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 implementing 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 ap - parent apathy.

Petoskey became “Joe Commoner’s” strongest advocate for listening to the little guy, who so much needs to feel represented today. His uniqueness to the movement comes from his interest politics is well documented and—among other issues—contributed to his unfortunate early death from 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, regarding 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. Ral- etta Ott, 2254 South County Road 48, 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.

The Saudi Arabia of water... Ban Michigan Fracking, a grassroots group dedicated to banind hydraulic fracturing in Michigan, says toxic wastes were dumped recently on roads within the Plate River watershed.

A Benzie County resident reported seeing an oil company truck spreading liquid waste on a county road. The substance had an “obnoxious odor” and an “oil sheen.” The witness said and according to subsequent lab tests conducted by the local road commission, the liquid contained benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes.

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

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—de - frames 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 (i.e. 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 potentially destructive practices.

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.”

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 the beauty of the area.

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. Now is the time to choose to ignore the past and are tending 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 for generations, and look like a barren moonscape. DNR has been implementing. Also, the land around them has since recovered and has become very diverse. So, with that in mind, further destruction of this land is completely unacceptable.

Mining company’s claim that “[t]opsoil could be returned to the site after 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 topsoil value of the native soils, it is not even possible that the material was an approximation that we will be left with nothing but a stagnant, mosquito-breeding mud 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’s politicians.

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

David Gorenflo
Traverse City, Michigan


Blueberry time in Michigan

I was first introduced to Michigan’s wild blueberries as a kid visit-
ing our cabin in the Upper Peninsula. Behind the cabin was a sphagnum bog and we would go out there and pick blackberries for the cereal and pie my mother would make. Everyone is aware that Michigan is one of the top producers of blue-
berries in the United States, but doesn’t even rank next to the blue-
berry production of Maine.

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

The twin rulings had the effect of pro-

Blueberries are one of the few cultivated native plants of North Amer-
ica and now hundreds of cultivar exist that can provide a sea-
on of blueberries from mid-July through September. Blueberries give in abundance to wild animals like deer, moose and bears that live in the area.

Lawsuit over environmental protection

Several lawsuits were brought against various levels of government—which include the Pigeon River Coun-
try Association, West Michigan Environ-
mental Action Council, Sierra Club and Michigan Nature Associa-
tion—challenged the NRC’s decision in In-
gham County Circuit Court on the grounds that the NRC had improperly delayed the decision up to negotiations between the DNR, oil companies holding leases and the Michi-
gan Attorney General’s office.

There were many others along the way—including his colleagues in the DNR like Pete Petosky, Dave Jenkins, Ralph MacMullin, Don Inman, of course—and some younger guys like Jim Hammill, and others. I owe a lot to Doug Scott, founder of the Wilderness Society, and Walt Pomeroy, who ran the Michigan Student Envi-
ronmental Coalition, for teaching me about grassroots ac-
tivism for conservation and for growing up to realize that some things make it quantum leap from say-
ing “somebody should do some-
thing” and “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, was board chair when I was hired; Horace M. “Huffy” Huff, who taught me about running an organ-
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Conservation Officer Logs (6/24/13 through 7/1/13)

**Conservation Officer Logs (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.

They were fishing 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 activity with stoic resignation.

We were able to learn a great deal about what Rodgers has identified as his “hit list,” which included a pair of mud-runners—a “mudder.” We were able to sit down with several well-known individuals.

As the intern maintained watch, Rodgers was able to view a scene that included three of the campers being ticketed at the Otsego Lake Campground.

**DISTRICT 1 (Marquette)**

CO Troy Luce was patrolling along Three Forks Road when he observed a subject carrying a gun. The subject stopped CO Luce and told him recently he had been hunting deer.

CO Luce asked if he would like to talk about some issues, and the subject decided to talk. The subject had been hunting illegally and had been at the popular hunting area near Big Lake. CO Luce stated he was sorry he had to ask questions and quoted the subject a ticket.

**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 vehicle. The subject was cited for littering and failure to register a campsite, operating a truck on the beach and no recreation passport.

CO Doug Hermanson recognized several unlicensed bow hunters. The individuals were ticketed for hunting without a license and were ultimately charged with poaching.

**DISTRICT 4**

CO Susan Ennett assisted in securing the scene with the fire department and responding to a complaint of someone burning in the woods.

CO Bigger was able to poach a deer from the suspect’s vehicle. The deer was recovered from the suspect’s vehicle and the suspect’s vehicle was searched for any evidence of the crime.

**DISTRICT 5 (Roscommon)**

CO Jason McCullough assisted in the search of a residence in Chloride Township in Oxford County with an air evacuation of a subject who was injured while sliding headfirst down a sand hill with a sled. After recovering the suspect, who was hit by a rock while coming out of the water, the subject was not found. The suspect was arrested and taken into custody.

CO Brian Olsen assisted local law enforcement agencies in Ogemaw County in a search for a 12-foot black bear that had gone fishing on his bicycle. After an all-night search, the missing boy was found in the morning at the scene of a party.

CO Steve Converse assisted CO Mary Bill with a second case where a subject crossed the road and began tearing up the land adjacent to the river.

CO Riggs stated he had poached a buck and was ticketed for poaching.

COs Steve Converse and Dan Bigger ticketed a subject for failing to properly register a campsite, operating a truck in reverse only to find himself buried and unable to continue.

CO Bigger contacted the subject and enforcement action was taken.

**DISTRICT 8 (Rose Lake)**

CO Mark Ennett was dispatched to the location where a drowning victim was found.

On the evening of the 17th, a 16-year-old female, an adult male, dove into the water to retrieve a child who had fallen into the water. The victim was finally spotted off-shore, and the 150-foot swim, after a 10-minute search, the victim was located, and he was brought to shore.

CO Ennett assisted in securing the scene and the missing person was able to be located by the members of the sheriff’s department until the person could be located and transported.

**DISTRICT 9 (Southfield)**

CO Mark Ennett was dispatched to the location where a drowning victim was found.

The victim was able to provide information about the whereabouts of the victim, and the suspect was ticketed.

CO Bigger contacted the subject and enforcement action was taken.

Sixteen-year-old female, an adult male, dove into the water to retrieve a child who had fallen into the water. The victim was finally spotted off-shore, and the 150-foot swim, after a 10-minute search, the victim was located, and he was brought to shore.

CO Ennett assisted in securing the scene and the missing person was able to be located by the members of the sheriff’s department until the person could be located and transported.

**DISTRICT 10 (Grand Rapids)**

CO Mark Ennett was dispatched to the location where a drowning victim was found.

The victim was able to provide information about the whereabouts of the victim, and the suspect was ticketed.

CO Bigger contacted the subject and enforcement action was taken.

Sixteen-year-old female, an adult male, dove into the water to retrieve a child who had fallen into the water. The victim was finally spotted off-shore, and the 150-foot swim, after a 10-minute search, the victim was located, and he was brought to shore.

CO Ennett assisted in securing the scene and the missing person was able to be located by the members of the sheriff’s department until the person could be located and transported.

**DISTRICT 11 (Vassar)**

CO Justin Strowinger ticketed a subject for driving his pickup truck on a public road and having a dog on a leash.

CO Ennett assisted in securing the scene with the fire department and responding to a complaint of someone burning in the woods.

**DISTRICT 12 (Portage)**

CO Doug Hermanson ticketed a subject for hunting without a license.

CO Ennett assisted in securing the scene with the fire department and responding to a complaint of someone burning in the woods.
A good place to stop and rest while traveling on the sometimes congested two lanes of U.S. 31 in Emmet County is the Michigan Fishes 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.

The North Woods Call

Now that’s a woodpecker!
By Doug Reeves

DNR Wildlife Assistant Chief

A crow-sized bird lit on the specially made seat 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 sapucker 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 pileated.

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—per second cavity nesters—use the holes. Birds such as chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, house wrens, eastern bluebirds, tree swallows and great-crested flycatchers build nests in 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 rectangular excavations carved into it. In those cases, the woodpeckers are seeking out carpenter ants and their larven 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 oaks are rare to nonexistent, their activity seems most evident in decayed aspen, dead ash, basswood and silver maple trees, but it is unusual to find evidence of their activity in pith 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!

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.

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.

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Oden Oasis
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North Woods Call

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