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Toughening Up

New Michigan conservation officer recruits are being whipped into fighting shape at the Michigan State Police training facility in Lansing. They are now nearly two months into a 22-week academy and still have several weeks to go. As previously reported in The North Woods Call, 31 candidates began the training Jan. 12—the first new recruit school since 2007—and those who are successful will go from "access wounder" 18 weeks of field training. The ramped up outdoor law enforcement troops are made possible through changes to Michigan’s hunting and fishing license fees, which officially took effect on March 1 (See related story on Page 8).

Local residents push back on U.P. mine proposal

Opposition to a proposed limestone mining operation near the Upper Peninsula community of Rexton appears to be gaining some steam.

A small group of local residents have jumped into the fray and are trying to prevent Canada-based Graymont from getting the state forest land that the company says it needs for the operation.

Graymont—a leading producer of limestone in the United States—has submitted a formal proposal to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and wants to acquire some 13,000 acres to set up several surface mining areas and perhaps one underground limestone mine. The company also operates a regional quarry near Gulliver in the Upper Peninsula.

Rexton-area residents have complained that they have not questioned the company on several points, but have not received any satisfactory answers as to how the limestone will be taken from the mines and how water resources sources will be protected.

"Our state land is already being compromised and sacrificed to accommodate a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine. The company also operates a ground limestone mine.

DNR officials have said that approval of the land transaction would not necessarily mean approval of mining operations. Those plans—presumably detailing impacts on land and water resources—would still need to go through regulatory review and permitting by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

DNR officials said they have been reviewing the proposal and considering comments that have been made by the general public, local government officials and others. If approved, it would represent one of the largest transfers of state land ever.

Critics say that such a hefty transaction should have been opened for competitive bidding, but the proposal is contingent on a vote of some sort.

"It is up to just one man—DNR Director Keith Creagh—to decide whether approval is given, they said, when something this significant should be considered on a statewide basis.

DNR officials themselves have acknowledged that the agency does not typically engage in large-scale sales of land to a private individual or organization about the state land, a decision that will have lasting ramifications on the public’s ability to bid to the property by means of auction. Because of this, DNR officials have suggested that Graymont propose a land exchange in order to proceed with the current proposal. If the proposal is accepted and all the necessary

Fisherman’s Island land swap opposed

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is reportedly considering a land swap deal between the St. Mary’s Cement Plant and Fisherman’s Island State Park near Charlevoix. But conservationists and some area residents—who reject it a “land grab”—are up in arms about the proposal.

The company wants to take 190 forested acres at the north end of the park to expand its quarrying operations. If the deal is approved, St. Mary’s would also take the Belts Bay access road that leads to a picturesque stretch of Lake Michigan beach, as well as trails that exist near park entrance. The woods would be quarried and a berm built along its edge.

A narrow strip of land between the berm and Lake Michigan would remain part of the park, but “without the north end, the beauty and environmental integrity of the park would be lost, according to Anne Zuzkowski, a Charlevoix resident and opponent of the plan.

The company has reportedly asked to move the park entrance several miles south into Norwood Township, which would be the third time the park entrance has been moved to accommodate the cement plant’s expanding quarry.

The proposal has reportedly been in the works for two years, Zuzkowski said, although a formal application had not yet been submitted to the DNR at the time of this writing. However, the company has received “conceptual” approval from Charlevoix Township, Norwood Township, the local planning commission and state officials, she said.

Curiously, the general public has not yet been part of these discussions, opponents say.

Michigan’s Conservation Sentinel Since 1953

This property—heavily used throughout the year by hikers, skiers, hunters, mushroomers, high school cross-country team members and others—would be removed from Fisherman’s Island State Park under the proposed land swap and replaced with what opponents say is a less-desirable piece of land.

Zuzkowski said that the piece of land St. Mary’s wants to give to the park is mostly a flat and somewhat marshy field. Claims that this property contains a blue ribbon trout stream are exaggerated, she said. In fact, the quarry pits are said to suck up the surrounding ground water, while the stream usually dries up in the summer.

The other long, narrow strip of land—which abuts state land on the east side—contains wetlands and a stream, she said. The west side has already been quarried, with a large berm built along the entire length. The quarry reportedly cannot be expanded in that direction due to wetlands regulations.

Opponents of the planned land swap have started a Facebook page containing maps and other information. The page, located at www.facebook.com/stoptheswap, received over 1,900 likes within the first ten days of posting.

"This land swap sets a dangerous precedent," Zuzkowski said. "Our state land is already being leased for fracking. Now our state parks are up for grabs to be compromised and sacrificed to accommodate corporate interests."

"I see no reason at all for any land exchange of this nature, rather than [for] the benefit of St. Mary’s cement plant," said East Jordan resident Brian Hammond Jr. in a letter published by the Charlevoix Courier. "Fisherman’s Island State Park is 2,678 acres of (Continued on Page 2)
Waiting for Springtime

A handful of leftover cattails from 2013 patiently wait for the return of spring in a wetland area near the North Woods Call office. After nearly two-and-a-half months of almost daily snowfall, the sun finally bathed lower Michigan for a few days in late February. But don’t put away those snowshoes and woolen mittens too soon. It will likely be another three weeks or so before the swamp grass begins to green and the first spring flowers emerge, bringing vibrant colors to the gray and often overcast landscape.

Opposition to Upper Peninsula mine proposal grows

(Continued from Page 1)

permits approved, it would likely be 30 to 50 years before underground mining is started, according to company officials. There would be just six direct jobs created by the surface mining, they said, although if a processing plant is constructed there could be 25 or 30 direct jobs.

Local residents say they are confused by those projected job numbers, because they reportedly were told at one point that there would be 75 jobs.

The proposal was up for review by the state’s Land Exchange Review Committee last month, but the panel’s preliminary decision was tabled until more information can be gathered, officials said. The committee is expected to reconvene in late March for a possible ruling, they said. The DNR will host a public meeting after that to give local residents the opportunity to respond.

“This is in conflict with the Pure Michigan campaign,” Trout Lake resident Kathy English told the Soo Evening News. “People are not going to want to see big mining trucks, or holes in the ground.”

“All we hear about is money, money, money,” added Frederick. “We hear very little about the people who are going to be affected by this.”

“People that moved [up north] chose to live there for pure air, quality of life, and peace and quiet,” said English. “People are not going to buy places, or move next to a mine.

A recent survey of Trout Lake Township residents reportedly showed about 95 percent are opposed to the project, as is the Trout Lake Township board.

Conserving the good earth

By Marguerite Gahagan

The good earth is man’s most precious possession. And, throughout the world today, that good earth is called upon to feed more and more millions of human beings.

Only recently has man recognized the desperate need to preserve his earth if it is to continue to serve him and his children’s children.

In Otsego County—a small piece of the world’s good earth—farmers celebrate the 10th anniversary of their Soil Conservation District. They are rightfully proud of their program, of their efforts to promote it, and of the results obvious even to the untrained eyes of the non-farmer.

Acres of dying land have been given new life, have become productive again, [and now] bear rich produce and healthy trees.

Science did much to make the miracle possible, but the courage to start on a project and to follow it through the long, slow years came from the farmer’s own heart.

Now the farmers with pride to fields where soil erosion was stopped by contour planting. They show rich acres that were brought back to productivity by the use of waterways.

They watch the slow, steady growth of trees, providing windbreaks that keep their soil from blowing away before their very eyes. And they watch the miracle, not alone, but banded together by a program that—through its far-reaching effects—can give them the satisfaction of a giant achievement.

The very vastness of the soil conservation program means individual vigilance. The task is never completed, but unending, a task to be carried on by this generation and the next.

The farmer is concerned with the understanding his child will have for the land. He has wisely, therefore, sought to teach the school boys and girls the value and necessity of conserving the good earth.

The district sponsors educational programs to interest the children and proudly claims that, in many cases, children have sold their own parents on the need for soil conservation.

In other distant lands, the good earth lies barren, riddled with all of fertility over the centuries. The message of soil conservation is slowly being carried to impoverished farmers in those lands.

Such programs—as the one in Otsego County with its tremendous achievements—assure the ever-growing spread of soil conservation across the world.

While the farmers themselves celebrate their district’s birthday, it is an occasion in which all county residents should gratefully share.

The work done in soil conservation is good for the farmer. It is for all mankind. And to the farmer, who by his labor makes the program successful, all mankind must indeed be grateful.

North Woods Notes

APRIL NRC MEETING: The April 10 meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) will be held at the Michigan State University Diagnostic Center, 4125 Beaumont Road, in Lansing. The May 8, June 12, Sept. 11 and Nov. 6 meetings will also be held at that same location, while the Oct. 9 meeting will be at the Ralph M. McQuaid Conference Center, 104 Conservation Drive, on Higgins Lake near Roscommon, where the March 13 gathering was held. Other NRC meetings during 2014 will be July 10 at the Outdoor Adventure and Discovery Center, 1801 Atwater Street in Detroit; Aug. 14 at a location yet to be determined in Munising; and Dec. 11 at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue in Lansing.

CLEANER VEHICLES: Today’s truck and automobile engines burn up to 95 percent cleaner than past models, according to Cheryl Byrum, SmartWay program director and developer at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. And non-road engines, such as those used in agriculture, have 90 percent less emissions and particulate matter, she said. “We’ve cut lead from fuel entirely,” Byrum said, “and cut fuel sulphur by 90 percent in gasoline and 99 percent in diesel.”

MANURE POLLUTION: Michigan environmental regulators say they’ll probably never know exactly how much waste escaped a large lagoon at a farm near Hopkins last month. The Department of Environmental Quality was awaiting results of water sample tests taken from Allegan County’s Bear Creek, following the Feb. 14 incident. An icy pipe and valve failed in the farm’s storm water system, causing backed-up manure to leak into drainage ditches and into Bear Creek. The creek feeds the Rabbit River, a tributary of the Kalamazoo River that flows into Lake Michigan. Cleanup activities are under way.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT: Risks associated with hydraulic fracturing in oil and gas development are exaggerated, says John Simon, Michigan field director for Energy in Depth, a public outreach campaign funded by the Independent Petroleum Association of America. While there will always be risks with any form of energy development, he said, the oil and gas industry is under constant scrutiny from federal and state regulators, and fracking has been successfully used in Michigan for decades.
Intervention on Schwartz Creek: Will it help?

The Escanaba River Watershed Project has been exploring the possible removal of a perched culvert in Dickinson County’s Schwartz Creek. The closure would be temporarily restored to improve brook trout habitat.

But some anglers say the pristine Upper Peninsula tributary stream—one of the headwaters of the Escanaba River’s West Branch—should remain.

The culvert reportedly cuts off some 20 miles of stream that brook trout could use for spawning. A four-year research project led by Northern Michigan University graduate student Joe Wagner to study the area, collect habitat and water-quality data, quantify the flow, and tag and follow some fish to determine in which body of water they exist.

Project leaders have met with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Dickinson County Conservation District and others to determine how trout travel in the system.

“If we could keep it to a minor project—less than 20 feet and no change in roadway elevation—it can minimize red tape,” Jensen said. “DEQ is very supportive. If the road commission and the DNR both agree and do the work, we can hopefully get this done this year.”

Meanwhile, the project has attracted additional partners: the Michigan Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) — which has a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant for a “fish passage program”—the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and outdoorsman who has a hunting camp on 40 acres downstream. “It has five miles of character, just as Mr. Nature planned it. I personally know the quality of the upper reaches of Schwartz Creek, because I have fished there since 1966.”

The availability of grant money for these types of projects too often influences decision making, he said, but in this case nothing needs to be done to improve stream quality and the DNR needs to “stop being influenced by special interests.”

Schwartz Creek currently “has over five miles of stream without a bridge over it,” he said. “It is the best of the best.”

The Escanaba River Watershed Project formed a few years ago when the DNR partnered with the 250-member Fred Waara Chapter of TU and the Escanaba River Association. DNR fisheries biologist Darren Kramer, who is working with the group, says the bottom line is to protect and improve the resources in the whole watershed, improve fishing for the general public and build a foundation to explore other opportunities on streams in the Upper Peninsula.

Wagner, the graduate student who spent the last two summers studying the situation, said he suspects the perched culvert is causing problems with water temperatures downstream in Schwartz Creek.

Bryan Burroughs, executive director of Michigan TU, said there are actually two Schwartz Creek culverts being examined. One, he said, may require a bridge, rather than a replacement culvert, but that will depend on the results of a planned engineering and feasibility study.

“We are evaluating options for two new road/stream crossing on Schwartz Creek,” confirmed Ryan McCombe, Fred Waara Chapter Conservation Committee chairman. “[We] anticipate finalizing designs and applying for permits this spring, and look forward to working with our partners to install new structures such as clear span bridges, or large fish-friendly culverts later this year.”

The benefits of reconnecting historically isolated fragments of the watershed would include greater fish and aquatic organism access to life-cycle critical habitats, according to McCombe. These habitats are essential for reproduction, rearing, feeding, overwintering and finding thermal refuge,” he said. “And best of all, they already exist. The new road/stream crossings should also improve the long-term stability of each crossing, and will increase their capacity to transport water and sediment—while strengthening the ecological sustainability of the watershed and benefiting all who fish and recreate in the central Upper Peninsula.”

Replacing the culverts on Schwartz Creek is just the first of what the local TU hopes will be numerous projects in the watershed.

Comparing strains of brown trout in Michigan fisheries

A four-year research project that compares two strains of brown trout that have been stocked in a pair of rivers, a handful of inland lakes and four Lake Michigan ports, is preliminarily showing that neither strain is best in all situations.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has long used Wild Rose strain brown trout for stocking across the state. But fisheries officials have become concerned about diminishing returns from the stockings of the Wild Rose strain, which has been in the system for many years.

So they launched an experiment in which similar numbers of Southern Michigan trout that have been taken from wild brook stock—were stocked in various bodies of water. The fish were fin-clipped (right ear clip for the Wild Rose strain, left ventral fin clip for Strurgeon River brown) for easy identification. The Au Sable River and Sturgeon River above the May River below Hodenpyl Dam—both tailwater fisheries—have been subject to mark-and-recapture, electro-fishing surveys for the last four years. “In the two tailwaters, the Sturgeon River strain appears to be doing poorly, while the Wild Rose strain seems to be growing in biomass and fish and good growth.”

The Sturgeon River strain fish grew more quickly than their Wild Rose counterparts, which have been in the hatchery system for many years and seem to grow more quickly than the Sturgeon River fish while in the system. But the Sturgeon River fish are still getting a design that looks like the kind of vigor biologists say that’s much of a surprise; brown trout have not done well in the Wild Rose basin. And that doesn’t seem to be a strain thing; it’s more likely a changing-ecosystem issue.

“We spend a lot of time and money raising fish in the hatchery and we want to know that what we’re stocking is surviving well enough and living long enough to be worth the effort,” Wills said. The project will be finished within the next 18 months and fisheries managers should have a better idea of what they want to do in the future.

The final report will not be completed until later this year. When it’s finished, those interested can find it at www.michigan.gov/fishresearch.

To learn more about Michigan TU, visit www.michigan.tu.org.

—Michigan DNR report

Fisheries managers are optimistic that if they can identify the right strain of brown trout, they’ll be able to grow more big brown fish like this male brown trout fisherman James Zellinger.

Reversing ecosystem issues

MLUI’s transportation policy

“By James Bruckbauer

It’s been nearly 10 years since the Grand Traverse Dinner Train picked up passengers in Traverse City and shuttled them through a three-hour tour of scenic northern Michigan. But a new study by the Michigan Land Use Institute (MLUI) is looking at a possible return of train service “Up North.”

Over the next several months, MLUI staff will research what it would cost to run a passenger train on an 11-mile stretch of railroad tracks between Traverse City and Williamsburg, just east of Acme Township.

The study will focus on the tracks between the former rail-road depot and the Turtle Creek Casino, where the line ends.

The Michigan Department of Transportation owns the line and leases the tracks to the Great Lakes Central Railroad Company.

Right now, those tracks occasionally carry a few freight train cars, but there are federal regulations—they are unable to carry passengers. The study will estimate what it would cost to upgrade the tracks so trains could once again carry passengers along the line.

The study will also describe the different ways trains could operate. One option involves refurbishing a historic trolley service on the former Grand Traverse Dinner Train running between the Grand Traverse Resort and Traverse City.

Researchers will also explore other train service that would focus on relieving car congestion on busy U.S. 31, which runs parallel to the tracks.

Maura Niemisto, a recent University of Michigan graduate who is leading the research on the study, says a tourist-type train could be a cost-effective way to get people moving.

They, if demand grows over time, that service may lead to a more detailed study on running frequent commuter trains.

The study will also examine other similar-sized communities that have initiated passenger rail service on existing freight train tracks. The researchers will focus on the Astoria Riverfront Trolley in Astoria, Ore.; the Napa Valley Wine Train in Napa, Calif.; and also support development near train stops. Master plans at both ends of the line include “multimodal” development that allows residents to walk, bike and use buses to reach their daily needs.

The report is expected to be released later this spring. It’s supported, in part, by a $5,000 grant through the National Association of Railroad Passengers.
They're their own unnecessary travel? endangered the future of mankind, why haven't they cut back on and the burning of fossil fuels is rapidly destroying our planet and embrace more energy efficient appliances and light bulbs—while various stripes are duplicitous about this issue—telling americans they must drive more fuel efficient cars, install better furnaces, or swap between the state of Michigan and St. Mary's Cement Inc. that shep would be more than a little upset about a proposed land be protected for future generations under the public trust. in the name of corporate expansion. about the only beneficiary that we can see. company and government officials have apparently gone about wwoods call.

Snowmobiles and the outdoors
We've never been particularly fond of snowmobilers in the north woods. Sure, they're fun to ride and cool to look at. Their place (often tavern-to-tavern) in a hurry. and they provide a terrific shot in the arm for local economies during the gray and overcast winter months. But they make a lot of noise, territize the wildlife and result in many property damage and personal injury accidents each year.

Jet fuel and national hypocrisy
When the president of the United States flew to East Lansing, Michigan, recently to sign the new farm bill into law and a few days later traveled on Air Force One all the way to California to talk about the alleged perils of climate change, we couldn't help but wonder how serious he is about curbing the use of fossil fuels.
A Boeing 747-200 plane the size of Air Force One is said to use in the neighborhood of five to eight gallons of high-octane jet fuel per mile flown. That averages somewhere around 4,023 gallons per hour, according to the International Civil Aviation Organization.

That's a lot of fuel, not to mention a heavy cost to U.S. taxpayers. And the current occupant of the White House has re-ported the use of aircraft more than any other president. But he's not the only one. Many politicians and bureaucrats of various stripes are duplicitous about this issue—telling Americans they must drive more fuel efficient cars, install better furnaces, or embrace more energy efficient appliances and light bulbs—while at the same time, rattle their nerves and numb our minds.

Unfortunately, noise is among the most pervasive forms of pollution. It comes from many sources—road traffic, airplanes, jet skis and garbage trucks. Not to mention construction equipment, lawn and garden machinery, and boom boxes. I've read that urbanites can double every eight to ten years.

The problem isn't just that noise is increasing every year. It can damage human health and well-being. Stress, high blood pressure, sleep interruptions and lost productivity are just a few of the maladies linked to noise pollution.

My father and his stepfather were railroad men on the Michigan Central line. They spent their lives with loud steam and diesel locomotives. "Grandpa Steve" was the first to become "hard of hearing," as the old folks said. Now my dad—as well as many of his retired co-workers—are in the same shape. And lately I've even heard a train whistle down in the tunnels. The rails—probably due to lawn and garden equipment, former factory jobs and perhaps my own brief stint on the Penn Central Railroad. Hearing loss is common in a noisy world. And, of course, it's one of the dubious perks of aging.

I grew up on a non-working farm in rural Michigan. I would often wake at night listening to a nearby whipperweedow, or the summer breeze blowing through the maple tree outside my bedroom window. I couldn't sleep with hundreds of birds perching in that same tree would wake me with their songs. I don't hear those sounds as often anymore. My ears are less capa-bile, but I'm also too distracted by the clamor of modern life.

we're losing it fast. I don't hear those sounds as often anymore. My ears are less capable, but I'm also too distracted by the clamor of modern life. We probably need better regula-tions and enforcement to limit noise in the areas we share. Polluting public spaces shouldn't be allowed. After all, society has long recognized its right to be free from physical assault, or to breathe clean air and drink clean water. Shouldn't we also have that right to peace and quiet?

Some people would say the bluegrass music I enjoy qualifies as noise pollution. But I try to play it softly. A good neighbor keeps his noise to himself. If you ask someone to name one of our most precious natural re-sources, you'll probably get an-swers like water, trees, and animals. But what about quiet? It may be one of our most endan-gered assets.

Henry David Thoreau said that noise was just as startling to his sensitive ears, sometimes if we'd even recognize ours. Quiet is a good thing. And we're losing it fast.

Book Review
A Feathered River Across the Sky—Joel Greenberg

By Richard Schinkel

Martha, the last living passenger pigeon, died one white Friday in May of last year.

"A Feathered River Across the Sky" is more than a documentation of the extinction of a species. It is a story about the reasons this bird became extinct and a tale about our current relationship with our na-tural world.

This book is remarkable in that it has literally reams of documentation on the billions of passenger pigeons that once existed in North America. Today, none remain.

The early records go back before the white man arrived. Passenger pigeons are recorded in American Indian lore. Native Americans recognized early on that the birds were a "finite" resource. Even though warring tribes could harvest the pigeons in peace, they also made truces to not take adult birds during nesting.

If we were to read one or two of the accounts about the huge numbers encountered, we would label them as preposterous. But the author has com-piled a vast number of testimonies across the U.S. and Canada, illustrating the unbelievable numbers seen and actu-ally harvested. These accounts come from farmers, hunters, farmers, businessmen, shipper and even or-nithologists—Audubon, Wilson, Gene Stratton Porter—as well as Chief Simon Pokagon.

Greenberg documents in detail the numbers re-port, shipped and eaten, as well as those taken just for sport. This great number of birds often wreaked havoc with farmers and even destroyed woods by breaking limbs and trees. They were seen as a prize, but also a scourge.

Michigan played a major part in the passenger pigeon's life. They nested in various areas of the state and provided income for much of the human population, even though there was no predicting when or where they would come year.

I live in southwest Michigan and am very inter-ested in Simon Pokagon of the Pokagon band of the Potawatomi Indians. Simon was the last chief of the tribe and held dominion over southern Wisconsin, northern Illinois, northern Indiana and southwest Michigan. The tribe still has holdings here. Simon studied the natural sciences. He described in detail the massive flocks moving in "unbroken lines" across the sky. Most of the critical documentation of numbers taken were from the tribe. Sadly, these are the lastest nestings in Wisconsin. The nest-ing occurred over 850 square miles in west-central Wisconsin in 1871. Previously, Petoskey, Michigan, was thought to be the largest flock.

Over 600 professional netters and hunters descend (Continued on Page 6)
**Letter to the Editor**

**Wildlife managers know best: Wolf hunt is not for voters**

Editor:

I would like to address the “Letter to the Editor,” written by Mark Karaba, regarding the wolf hunt issue. For the record, I completely agree with Mr. Karaba and would like to add some more comments to his point.

I have had conversations with individuals who are opposed to any form of wolf hunting in Michigan, and I can safely conclude that their position is based purely on emotion, rather than logic.

Proof of this in the typical conversation that takes place on this issue. I ask this question: “You are opposed to hunting wolves, so why don’t you feel the same about coyotes?”

The usual response is, “Well, there are plenty of coyotes!” So, I respond, “So what are you going to do when there are a plenty of wolves, of which, in certain areas, there already are?”

From that point, the responses are all the varying anti-wolf talking points such as, “They just want to exterminate the wolf again,” “They just want to sell a few more hunting permits,” or “We need wolves to take care of sick animals,” and my personal favorite, “We need wolves because they kill only sick and dying animals.” “Yes, somebody actually said that to me!”

My point in asking the “coyote” question is to expose the misinformation and hypocrisy surrounding this issue. There is plenty of concern for the wolf and virtually none for the coyote. This makes no sense, especially when you consider the fact that the wolf and the coyote are essentially the same animal. The one big difference between them being the wolf is far more aggressive and tenacious.

Hundreds of coyotes are killed each year in Michigan and there are still plenty of coyotes. At some point, the same will be said of the wolf. In some areas, that situation already exists. Should there be a ban on hunting wolves, what then will the process be to control their numbers?

Wolf hunting in Michigan can’t—and should never be—up to voters. With all due respect, most Michiganders are simply not educated enough on the subject of wildlife population management to be making these types of decisions. If so, we would be voting on everything, including whether or not there should be a deer hunting season, bag limits on grouse, what the minimum trout size should be and so on down the line.

Should wolf hunting become a ballot issue, anti-hunting groups such as the DDLA (Doris Day Animal League), PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), KMWP (Keep Michigan Wolves Protected), Sierra Club, and others will flood Michigan with anti-hunting propaganda. Misinformation and attempts to stir up negative emotions on this issue—all logic will be lost.

(Yes, the Sierra Club is an anti-hunting group, which is why I chose not to ask for their assistance with my fight against the U.P. Lime-stripe mine.)

In conclusion, I am a hunter and have been for over 40 years. As such, I believe that all wildlife needs to be logically managed—the wolf, the coyote, the bull, the deer, the fish. What is important is simply making sure they have a place in the ecosystem and that there is no question of them being eradicated. The wolf is just another animal and its population needs to be managed. We have learned the same lesson with the wolf hunt. It is a question of numbers.

The performances of data on wolf numbers will not get out of control. Make no mistake, as with coyotes, it will happen. What then will the solution be?

David Gorendo
Traverse City, Michigan

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**Au Sable Sable hatch: The river as a stage**

from Betsy Haywood Hemmings

**River Reflections**

Major June events: Summer solstice, the 53rd wedding anniversary of my parents—and drum roll please—the Au Sable River hatch.

The hatch is big on the main stream of the Au Sable River (excuse the understatement). It’s actually somewhat ridiculous; you have to be at the right place at just the right time, which generally is in the middle of the night. Sometimes there can be some confusion with the hex spring from seemingly nowhere, lurking to feed, and sometimes not.

Our little camp is on a part of the river renown for hex, thanks to a fair amount of mud, (not conducive to fishing credos) the studdy-river’s edge. Mud, in the fly-fishing context, is good, apparently. Because rumor has it, where there’s mud, there’s hex and where there’s, there’s, trout. Big trout. This where the magic happens.

I found myself on our little dock, smack dab in the middle of hex hatch last summer, on a very beautiful June evening. The fireflies were already blinking away, much earlier than I remembered from past years, but in keeping with the evening. The fly fisher-men were out in spades, spread out along this lovely space of the river. I heard someone say: “There are hex here.” That’s a very important statement, one not to be taken lightly.

The trout, a pretty orange word. I’m told that the hex is to mayflies as a Spake’s burger is to the world of hamburgers—revered for their ability to lure trout. Downeast, we have fish flies—also part of the mayfly family—which are often called “six.” I’m never sure why. Fish flies simply because they have to drive, or step on, thousands of writhing flies that are just trying to make it up the river. I was sorry I left my private box seat and made my way up stream a tad. I couldn’t see a darn thing, which makes me wonder where there is such confusion when you can’t see what you catch. But as usual, I digress. After rapping many on various canvas and Tupperware shrubs, I heard a lot of commotion in the water of the splashing variety.

He had caught a trout of enormous proportions, though frankly, now that I think about it, I really didn’t see it. So I guess I’ll have to take his word for it. But judging from the amount of splashing and the pitch of his voice, it must have been a humdinger.

I called it a night at this point, but certainly the fisher people did not. After waiting a few hours, they did exit the river, having mastered as many trout as they could. I was sorry not to be there all night, but I did catch the second act a few hours later.

So then what happens? Well, the next morning, the skies were clear, the water was more clear, and the stories of great value got told.

There are lots of stories of great value. It’s interesting: Rarely do fishermen sit around the fire and tell stories of long periods of abstinence. It’s all about the drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring-in a big one, the tragedy of the one that got away, and the comedy of one to which the acerbic sparrows never went. I mean it. I really mean it. The only drama of bring
The passenger pigeon's flight to extinction
This has been a cold and snowy winter, and many of us would not be unhappy if it ended at a reasonable time. March will bring sugaring and the last of the snows. We also may—at least here in the south—see the end of ice fishing.

Now is the time to prepare for the new nesting season—a good time to check those bird nesting boxes to make sure they are in good condition. There are a few additional ones for the spring and summer seasons. You never have too many nesting boxes. The birds will decide which they will use and maximize the breeding habitat.

When inspecting your next boxes, make sure they aren’t being used as a roost at night. I have two that are—one by five eastern bluebirds and one by a downy woodpecker. The woodpecker is just outside the kitchen window and is fun to watch approach and leave. He is not in the birch tree and looks all around, then quick as a flash enter the house.

There are numerous books and articles dealing with the proper construction and dimensions of bird nesting boxes. In almost every case, some proponents are totally sold on their own design. I would look at what is available for lumber and decide what species you wish to attract.

Some of the lumber companies have what they call a second, or extra, bin of odds-and-ends. Those pieces can be very attractive, cost wise. I usually get at least 5,000 barrels (170,000 gallons) and would impact at least 25 square miles of lake surface.

In the event of a spill, the company said, the federal government would determine the amount of financial responsibility Enbridge occurs.

At this point, the meeting was reportedly closed amid several shouts from the audience about Enbridge being “liars” and not really answering the questions posed.

It’s finally time to get ready for spring nesting
Book Review: The passenger pigeon’s flight to extinction
(Continued from Page 4)
ded on the Wisconsin flock, filling all vacant rooms. One merchant reported selling sixteen tons each of shot and powder over the season. It was estimated that this represented over one-half million rounds of shot.

From the shipping records, it is estimated that at least 1,200,000 dead pigeons were shipped during the forty days of hunting. Somewhere between 100 to 200 barrels of pigeons were shipped daily—each barrel weighing 100 pounds.

In 1872 a nesting occurred near South Haven and Bangor, Michigan. Shelby had a nesting where 100,000 were killed, caught and shipped. Petoskey had the best documentation of its harvest, which occurred in 1878 and the birds covered an area about three miles wide and forty miles long. It was estimated that the number shipped was as large as the Wisconsin harvest of over one million birds. It was in this area that the first conservation efforts emerged. One of the first conservation groups, the Michigan Sportsmen Association, was involved. Michigan had set some restrictions on harvesting and the association tried to intervene, with little success. Conservation efforts were formed as the years went by.

Michigan was one of the first states to try and control market hunting and is actually the only state in the U.S. to grant the passenger pigeon complete protection in 1897. Today we face extinction of countless species from four different threats. These threats include global warming, introduced species and direct taking of the organisms. This book is extremely well researched, documented, written and easy to read. It does not preach—just lays out the facts. It is recommended for all sportsman and outdoor enthusiasts. If you can attend one of the many talks Joel Greenberg is giving across Michigan and through-out the Midwest to mark the 100th anniversary. He will be giving a presentation March 22 at Sarett Nature Center near Benton Harbor.

Knowledge, vision & integrity needed to protect Michigan resources
(Continued from Page 5)
Due to bear hunting using animal guts, “human predators” regularly sell and maintain tainted killing locations on public land for sizeable sums of money. Killing a bear under such circumstances to collect a trophy, or bragging rights, by little more than an “animal harvester” has no legitimate stance in the once-prodigious annals of Michigan hunting.

In defense of legitimate hunting, by comparison a small number of real bear hunters hunting with dogs are responsible for harvesting a limited number of bears in 2013. The hunter’s dogs, if successful, will tree a bear. The hunter is then left to determine whether the bear is worthy of taking.

Most bear harvested after being treed by dogs are of mature size. Shooting young (cub) bears holds no sport for long-term dog hunters who train their dogs for the challenge presented by mature bear.

Hunting bear by dogs is a rich and historical tradition reaching back several hundred years through the United States. The sport is carried out by real woodsmen and requires a serious investment of both time and energy. Such factors are why only a limited few participate in comparison to other types of hunting.

Speaking with my long-time friends who hunt using dogs causes me to harken back to my early days in the woods, when discovering deer on my own initiative peaked my sense of excitement for the hunt. Mine was like the excitement produced for the bear hunter when they hear the “music of their dogs.”

Once again, the issue boils down to how deer and bear are harvested. Should we continue to lure wild creatures with “man-placed food,” versus allowing them to find natural food sources that the creatures help discover?

Hunting by using dogs requires hunting bear beyond their terms. In doing so, the bear has no chance of out-maneuvering the dogs on their turf is the challenge of the hunt. It creates sport for the bear with a very real challenge to the bear that normally hasn’t been seen.

Shooting a bear or deer only after using skill, knowledge and energy falls within the parameters of what all real hunting once was and meant to be. Taking a bear, or deer, based upon deception by luring it to an artificial food location removes any semblance of ethical hunting practice.

We need to once and for all times set aside favoritism and rediscovers our original mission of protecting nature’s ways. An artificial food location removes any semblance of ethical hunting practice.

John Gannett is a writer and outdoorsman and is the owner of Outdoor Research. This Viewpoint article appeared in the late (Late February) edition of The North Woods Call.
**Domestic violence, snowmobile madness, import violations & an arctic fox bite**

**DISTRICT 1 (Marquette)**

CO Elton Luce concluded an investigation in which a male was arrested last night from the kid last year. The person was arrested on the charges of operating while under the influence of a controlled substance, domestic violence and assault on a police officer. The man was released from the Chippewa County jail.

**DISTRICT 2 (Newberry)**

Sgt. Gerald Thayer and LL Skip Haga, while on patrol at the I-550 in Saint Marie, observed a suspect operating a snowmobile without a valid registration and no trail permit. When contact was made, a whistle was blown and the suspect stopped. Sobriety tests were conducted and the suspect was found to be operating under the influence. He was transported and lodged in the Chippewa County jail.

**DISTRICT 3 (Gaylord)**

COs Mike Feagan and Eric Bottorff found a tip-up at 1/4 mile south of the Marquette city limits on the 45th parallel. The flag was set off and the COs waited 25 minutes with no response from an angler. Tracks were followed to a nearby residence, where the suspect claimed he was keeping a close eye on the tip-up. A ticket was issued for fishing without an attendant fishing line.

**Officers in Area 3 participated in Operation Lifesaver** which is a joint enforcement effort with the county sheriff’s department, MICHIGAN STATE POLICE, and the railroad company. Eight tickets were issued during the enforcement detail, four for railroad trespass, one for a trespassing snowmobile, one for no trail permit, and another individual was arrested for operating a snowmobile while his license was suspended.

**DISTRICT 4 (Cadillac)**

CO Holly Ponnemni and Sgt. Robert Roberts conducted a traffic stop and arrest on a snowmobile for a traffic violation. The snowmobile had no tags and the operator did not have a valid fishing license. COs stopped the operator to make a citizen copy of the tickets. The operator was issued 3 tickets, one for no trail permit, and another in addition to the traffic violation.

**DISTRICT 5 (Roscommon)**

CO Mike Hearn was patrolling Kalkaska County on snowmobiles when he began following a group of riders through a residential neighborhood. The CO estimated their speeds at over 75 mph. The CO was able to get the last machine in the group to stop. He then was able to follow the suspect back to the cabin and make contact with the remainder of the riders. The CO Hearn educated the group on the laws regarding operation of snowmobiles, which included issuance of a ticket.

**DISTRICT 6 (Bay City)**

COs Ken Lowell, Jeremy Payne and Dan Lee conducted a group patrol on the Saginaw River. They were looking for a group who wanted to harvest the same group had worked an area where a short while and over-limit were being taken. It took them a few hours to locate and another call to the number of snowmobile and ORV violations they encountered on their way. Multiple tickets were issued for no trail permits, no registration, no trail permits, no helmets, 100-foot rule violations, and referring the subjects to the DPS.

**DISTRICT 7 (Rose Lake)**

CO Kyle Bader checked a pair of anglers on Gilead Lake. One of the pairs had no fishing license and his fish, but when the CO asked about a plastic shopping bag in his sled, he said, “I do have a fish in there.” The CO found a 14-inch largemouth bass and a 13-inch largemouth bass. The angler was ticketed for taking a bass out of season.

**DISTRICT 8 (Munising)**

CO Troy Mueller was working a snowmobile patrol when he stopped a snowmobiler operating against the flow of traffic. Upon making contact with the operator, CO Mueller observed what he thought was a valid trail permit. Upon a closer inspection, CO Mueller found that the operator had his fish on a bucket of fish. The CO identified himself and questioned the fish, which totaled 59 fish—34 over his legal limit. A ticket was issued for the violation.

**DISTRICT 9 (Southfield)**

Checking on a complaint of trash dumped on state land, CO Dan Walzak found the discarded household trash containing a number of magazines with a name and address on it. During the course of the address, CO Walzak was able to contact the resident andquized the suspect. The suspect had ended up in a parking lot on state land 12 miles away. The subject stated that he had forgotten his grandfather had left him to know that he was being sought. Returning to the parking lot a little over an hour later, CO Walzak found the area totally cleaned up—with no evidence of there ever being trash dumped. Contacting the grand- father, the officer found that he had gone to clean it up as soon as he got the call from his grandfather. Asked why he dumped the trash in the parking lot, he said, “I did not know he stated that he was late getting the trash out for pick-up and his grandfather had been earlier that day telling him to do something with it, so he dumped it. He also stated that as he was driving away he knew he had done something wrong. En- forcement action was taken.
New license options arrive

As of March 1, Michigan hunters can purchase new license options and prices in line with those of other states, and generate the revenue necessary to deliver the best in outdoor recreation opportunities. If you're among the first customers who will notice, they said—besides the prices—is an easier-to-navigate number of license choices, falling from 227 down to just over 40. Individual archery deer and firearm deer licenses are gone, as are restricted fishing licenses. Some prices have risen, they acknowledged, while some remain the same, and others have decreased.

DNR Director Keith Creagh says the changes will provide valuable support for the work the DNR does in close cooperation with partner organizations. “World-class natural resources belong to everybody in Michigan and define who we are as a state,” Creagh said. “Those resources are fundamental to why people live in, visit and set up shop in Michigan—and that’s vital to our state and local economies. "We want to make it easier for people to get the licenses they need and ensure the funding that will allow the DNR and our partners to enhance and protect our natural resources for current and future generations.”

Under the new structure, all hunters will be required to purchase a base license, with different prices for resident, junior, senior and nonresident hunters. The base license (which allows the buyer to hunt small game) is needed to purchase any other licenses. Deer hunters will have the option of buying one deer license ($20) or two-deer licenses ($40). Hunters may choose one option or the other. The single deer license replaces the separate firearm and archery season licenses of previous years, and is valid for archery, firearm and muzzleloader seasons. Hunters who opt for the single tag won’t be able to purchase a second, but they will be able to purchase antlerless licenses where available.

With the two-tag deer combo license, both licenses are valid for archery, firearm and muzzleloader seasons. It includes one regular and one restricted license, as in previous years. Antler point restrictions will apply based on the area of the state.

Antlerless deer licenses cost $20, and will continue to be available based on license quotas set for each deer management unit; quotas should be finalized in July.

For anglers, the two previous options for fishing licenses—one for everything except trout and salmon and another that includes trout and salmon—have been rolled into one license. A resident fishing license will cost $25 and includes fishing for trout and salmon (down from $28 if you bought the all-species license under the old system). A one-day fishing license will cost just $10.

The new fishing licenses are required beginning April 1.

The hook-and-bullet crowd can try the hunt/fish combo (the base license, a fishing license and two deer tags), which is available for $76, a modest savings compared to buying them separately. Discounts on some licenses will be available for youths and seniors. Active military and veterans with 100-percent disability who were or are Michigan residents will also be eligible for free licenses.

The DNR anticipates the new license options, when fully implemented, could bring in up to $18 million annually in new revenue, some of which is already being spent on the recruitment and training of more conservation officers, as well as recently announced grant programs to improve wildlife and aquatic habitat.

Document details health of Michigan’s forest land

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has released its 2013 Forest Health Highlights report, which includes an overview of Michigan’s forests, the insects and diseases that have threatened them over the past year, and details about what DNR staff is doing to improve forest resources.

The report breaks down forest health threats by examining insects and diseases, forest decline, invasive plant control and other health concerns. Accompanying photos and maps illustrate the pests and show the effects they have had on Michigan’s forest system.

Highlighted are DNR efforts to control oak wilt, a serious disease that threatens Michigan’s extensive red oak resource. In cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, tens of thousands of feet of root graft barriers have been installed on state forest land. These barriers prevent oak wilt from moving to healthy trees through infected root systems.

“The key to slowing the onslaught of exotic invasive organisms in Michigan’s forests is public awareness,” said Dr. Bob Heyd, DNR Forest Pest Management program manager. “The Forest Health Highlights report provides timely information about the condition of our forests and what’s being done to protect this important resource.”

Michigan’s approximately 20 million acres of forest land play a key role in the state’s recreation, forest products and other important industries, and the health of those forests is essential to sustaining this vital resource for many generations, DNR officials said.

To learn more about the health of state forests, visit www.michigan.gov/foresthealth to see the full report.

—Michigan DNR report

Moon Flight

A bold eagle soars across the Michigan sky as a half-moon hangs gloriously above. This photo, courtesy of the newly formed Mackinac Straits Raptor Watch group in northern Michigan, honors just one of the many birds of prey that pass over the Straits of Mackinac enroute to summer nesting grounds further north. The nonprofit group aims to survey the birds and educate people about their natural history. Numerous raptors—among them eagles, hawks and owls—gather near Mackinaw City before crossing to the Upper Peninsula. The region’s natural woodlands and fields serve as a stopover area while the birds await appropriate conditions to continue their northward migration. Bird watchers will also be interested in the 8th annual Michigan Bird Conservation Initiative meeting to be held March 20-22 at the Kettunen Center in Tunica. An assortment of presentations and educational workshops will be held. For more information and to register—the registration deadline is March 10—visit the Kalamazoo Nature Center website at https://naturecenter.thankyou4caring.org/mibi-workshop-2014.

Final Shot

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