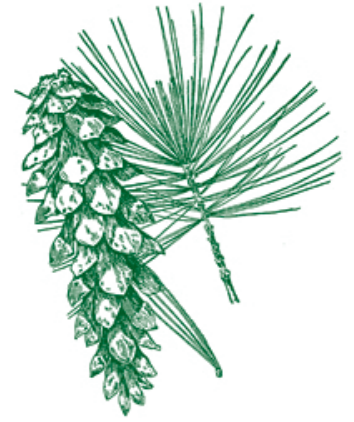




“The newspaper for people
who love the north”



Early June 2014
\$2.50

Vol. 61, No. 13
Digital Delivery

THE
NORTHWOODS
CALL

Michigan's Conservation Sentinel Since 1953



Carved wooden wall hanging at the Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City

**“Ample Evidence”
of Bid-Rigging?**

Page 1

**Judge Dismisses
DNR Lawsuit**

Page 1

**The Great Wolf
Hunt Debate**

Page 3

**Remembering
Farley Mowat**

Page 3

**Schwartz Creek
Conundrum**

Page 5

**Who Speaks
for Nature?**

Page 5

www.mynorthwoodscall.com

www.mynorthwoodscall.com



North Woods Notes

RECYCLING IN MICHIGAN: At 15 percent, Michigan is said to have one of the worst residential recycling rates in the nation. Gov. Rick Snyder recently released a plan to change that. According to Kerrin O'Brien, executive director of the Michigan Recycling Coalition, the state is not providing enough access to convenient recycling opportunities. A broad education program is also needed to help people understand the economic and environmental value of recycling, she said.

FERAL SWINE: Like other midwestern states, Michigan is experiencing a growing problem with feral, or wild, swine, according to the Department of Natural Resources. Thirty years ago, there were no feral swine sightings reported in the state, they said. By the end of 2011, however, more than 340 feral swine had been spotted in 72 of Michigan's 83 counties, and 286 have been reported killed. A sow can have two litters a year of four to six piglets. Based on their prolific breeding practices, it is estimated that feral swine in Michigan currently could number between 1,000 and 3,000. Feral swine are a problem for two main reasons, DNR officials said. They can host many parasites and diseases that threaten humans, domestic livestock and wildlife; and they can cause extensive damage to forests, agricultural lands and Michigan's water resources.

CURWOOD FESTIVAL: It's time to join the people of Owosso, Michigan, in celebrating the 136th birthday of James Oliver Curwood. The author, screenwriter, outdoor adventurer and conservationist was a native of the community and spent most of his life there. This year's Curwood Festival is coming up June 5-8. Other summertime events on the horizon in the next month are the Big Mac Spring Bike Tour and Mackinac Bridge Ride (June 14-15) and the National Cherry Festival in Traverse City (July 5-12).

ISLE ROYALE WOLVES: The National Park Service has apparently decided not to intervene—for now, at least—to stop declines in the wolf population on Isle Royale in Lake Superior. Phyllis Green, Isle Royale National Park superintendent, said recently that the agency would not tamper with the situation as long as a breeding population of wolves exist on the island. Officials have considered bringing new wolves to the island via human-assisted measures and it is still an option, Green said, if it is determined sometime that there is no longer a breeding population of wolves. In addition, a new study on the island moose population's impact on the bio-community of the forest, as well as their historic relationship to the wolves, is planned, which some conservationists say should also look at the option of a limited moose hunt.

SELLING OUR FORESTS: The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR)—the same agency that some insist is always in the best position to “scientifically manage” the state's natural resources—is reportedly still considering the largest sale of state-managed forestland in its history. If the proposed sale is approved, about 10,000 acres may go to Graymont—a leading limestone mining company based in British Columbia. Graymont wants to create a sprawling 13,000-acre, open-pit and underground mining operation near Rexton in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, but some local residents, sportsmen and conservationists say the land should remain in the public trust.

ALGAE BLOOMS: Forecasters are now predicting that billowing blooms of toxic algae will overrun Lake Erie this summer, making 2014 the latest in a line of recent years that have seen the lake looking like “a big, slimy putting green.”

SHEEP DOGS & SEAGULLS: Researchers recently found that hard working sheep dogs proved successful at keeping seagulls away from Lake Michigan beaches. Gull droppings are known to be a source of E. coli bacteria.

OCQUEOC RIVER: The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has completed a project that helped restore the natural flow back to the Ocqueoc River in Presque Isle County. To do so, they removed large concrete abutments from a grist mill that operated at this site in the early 1910s.

PLASTIC POLLUTION: The tiny plastic particles that have become more popular in soaps and facial scrubs over the last few years are showing up on beaches and in the waters of the Great Lakes, especially Lake Erie in New York, according to *The Buffalo News*.

RIP CURRENTS: In the past 12 years, 138 Great Lakes swimmers have drowned in incidents blamed at least in part on rip currents and other dangerous currents. Half the deaths—69—occurred in Michigan.

(Continued on Page 2)

“Ample evidence” of bid-rigging, Schuette says

Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette in May filed a brief urging that the state's case against Chesapeake Energy (People vs. Chesapeake) go to trial on two counts of anti-trust violation and one count of attempted anti-trust violation.

The brief says there is “ample evidence that the defendant's conduct constituted bid-rigging” during the sale of oil and gas leases on land managed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Chesapeake Energy was charged with the alleged illegal activity along Encana Oil & Gas USA.

The two firms were competitors for Michigan oil and gas leases, the attorney general said, but they allegedly discussed and executed a plan to withhold contract offers from both private

landowners and the State of Michigan by dividing their bids during a May 2010 auction. The activity drove down bid prices from \$1,510 to \$40 per acre, state officials said.

Encana settled its portion of the case during a pre-trial hearing in April. The company was ordered to pay the state \$5 million.

Chesapeake, however, was continuing to fight the charges at this writing and has reportedly accused Michigan prosecutors of “cherry picking the company's internal e-mails to suggest its former chief executive officer invited Encana to join in the alleged caper.

According to prosecutors, Chesapeake's e-mails included suggestions that the two companies “throw in 50/50” on the bids, “rather than bash each other's

brains out.” In a later note, the CEO, who left the company last year following a shareholder revolt, said the firms could save “billions of dollars in lease competition.”

Company attorney's, however, said other portions of some of the same e-mail messages show that former CEO, Aubrey McClendon, was open to competition. “The only evidence the state can point to is a select group of documents in the case,” they said, “but the documents taken as a whole make abundantly clear that no agreement was reached. Theories and speculation are not evidence.”

Nevertheless, Chesapeake remained charged with conspiring to restrain trade, in violation of Michigan's anti-trust laws. It

(Continued on Page 2)



Skunked

—North Woods Call photo

This year's crop of skunk cabbage is out in force along Bonnie Brook, a small feeder stream just down the hill from The North Woods Call office. Meanwhile, The Call gang continues to wade through a stinky jungle of life events that are seemingly out of our control (see the editor's note at the bottom of page 4).

Allegan judge dismisses lawsuit against DNR

Allegan County Circuit Judge Margaret Bakker on May 2 dismissed a lawsuit against the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that was filed by a citizens' group seeking to nullify state mineral leases.

The suit cited leases sold for 12,000 acres of land in the Allegan State Game and Recreation Area.

Bakker apparently was not persuaded by the argument that the matter was ripe for decision at this stage, because leasing transfers substantive property rights to oil and gas companies. Instead, she agreed with DNR attorneys and found that there is no “loss or injury” until and unless the Department of Environmental Quality

(DEQ)—a separate agency—issues permits to drill.

A similar lawsuit in Barry County had already been dismissed by a judge there.

Members of Michigan Land Air Water Defense (MLAWD), which filed the legal action, said they “respectfully disagree” with the court's analysis, which they believe relieves the DNR from its responsibilities to uphold the public trust and enforce the Michigan Environmental Protection Act. That duty, they said, includes the creation of an environmental assessment, or impact statement, from the DNR.

DNR attorneys argued that requirements of the Environmental

Protection Act did not apply in this situation. The leases, they said, are classified in such a way that the DNR doesn't have to study and report on the environmental impacts. All of the leases in question are “nondevelopment,” they said, and there is no development of the land surface of any kind.”

The MLAWD attorney did not receive the courts opinion until May 12, they said, and the group is now evaluating both the strength of a possible appeal and whether it can hope to raise funds sufficient to carry an appeal forward.

“While we're disappointed in Judge Bakker's ruling, MLAWD remains committed to educating

(Continued on Page 2)

Our 61st Year: Looking Back to May 19, 1971

An essential environment

By Glen Sheppard

This column was recently reminded of why *The North Woods Call's* editor is often considered a radical, an alarmist, by Department of Natural Resources chiefs, and industrial and real estate exploiters.

The reminder was our first trip downstate in about 18 months.

How, indeed, can people living in "that environment" take serious the warnings of people who see a few dozen—or even a few hundred—more cottages, or a few more miles of highway in thousands of acres of forest, as a threat to "their environment?"

More to the point, how can we expect people who will tolerate the gross crime against nature that spreads in every direction south of Farwell to understand and care for the north country?

The Call's editor had forgotten. It was a shock. Literally.

By the time I reached Lansing, after driving for 80 miles without once seeing an area where man's influence was not dominant on the landscape, I was shaking. I was too embarrassed by my quaking hands to try to light my pipe when I met Mrs. Willard Wolfe, Dr. John Tanton and Walt Pomeroy. They were kind enough not to laugh.

Obviously, people—even those of the same blood and skin color—are radically different. Just as less obnoxious creatures of the same family are different.

It can readily be argued that the highly trained, tense show dog is the ultimate of his race. But some of us would argue that the wild, unrestrained wolf—which can't survive the tense, cluttered world of the much-prized show dog—is far more "real."

On two occasions, I have seen people in passing cars give no more than a moment's glance at bald eagles that were only a few feet from the highway. To these people, this symbol of naturalness and freedom meant nothing. Yet it is almost a sure thing that some of them have placed considerable value on a caged bird that twittered and sang on cue.

Not that there is anything wrong with the caged bird, the artificial dog, or men who will live in a caged, fouled, unnatural environment. They, like the wolf and the eagle, belong. It is only that it is a shock to be exposed to their habitat.

And it is frightening to be reminded that persons who can survive in this dismal, unreal habitat control what is happening to the habitat that the "lesser" creatures require if they are to survive.

Robert Service's lines tell it well:

The palace, the hovel next door;

The insolent towers that sprawl to the sky,

The crush and the rush and the roar.

I'm trapped like a fox and a fear for my pelt;

I cower in the crash and the glare.

... We're nothing but brute with a little veneer,

And nature is best after all.

There are, of course, truly flexible men. Men, who like deer, can move between a forest and urban environment with no apparent loss of stability, judgement, or values. There are others who "fit" in one environment, but can "visit" the other without obvious shock.

And there are the "inbetweeners." Those who can live in places like Midland County—with its 63,769 people, stinking air, filthy water and compressed green belts—but could not live in Genesee County, or Oakland County.

These candid observations may prove nothing. The only thing this column was sure of was the pure joy of being back in the north country.

The Au Sable valley the next day was never more perfect. Mayflies were hatching. Trout were taking. The fragrance of the humble jack pines and their rotting neighbors in the swamp. An old friend, a cedar tree, whose trunk is now perfectly bent to my back's contour after years of napping beside the river.

The endless horizons of no longer unsullied Lake Michigan. A vision of a long canoe, paddled by gaunt men, nearing Beaver Island, which stood out in the distance. The big, red hound, who sat panting in my ear, wanting to romp down the beach, but willing to wait while I watched the sun dance on the water.

This environment is essential to the survival of some people.

Giving polluters a break?

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) recently cut two of Michigan's largest polluters a break when it lowered air quality standards to meet the needs of Marathon oil refinery and Severstal steel plant—both in Detroit.

According to the Michigan League of Conservation Voters (MLCV), instead of protecting the health of Michiganders living near both industrial plants and the qual-

ity of the air we all breathe, the DEQ weakened the rules so that both plants can continue letting loose toxic chemicals without facing penalties.

Severstal's track record is especially egregious, MLCV officials said, with 38 air quality violations to their name.

The DEQ should push back and hold them accountable, they said, rather than changing the rules in their favor.

Support the conservation of natural resources in the Great Lakes region



Hall of Famers

—Photo courtesy of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs

The newest class of Michigan Environmental Hall of Fame members was inducted April 10 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids. As previously reported in *The North Woods Call*, inductees included Norm Spring, Joan Wolfe, Don Inman, Dave Dempsey, Ralph Bailey, Tom Washington, the Clinton River Watershed Council, Mayville Elementary School, and the wolf/moose project on Isle Royale initiated by Durward Allen. Present to accept the awards for themselves or others were (from left) John Vucetich, Don Inman, Anne Vaara, Susan Kelsey, Patricia McNinch, Cindy Wilson, Kim Morden, Dave Washington, Norm Spring, Dave Dempsey and Joan Wolfe.

Allegan judge dismisses lawsuit

(Continued from Page 1)

the public about oil and gas development on and under Michigan's public lands," the group said in a prepared statement released following the ruling, "and we will not be dissuaded from keeping a close eye on the status of mineral leases and drilling permits in southwest Michigan."

During an April 10 hearing on the matter, attorney Jim Olson, who represents MLAWD, argued that the DNR should have been held to tighter standards when it auctioned the leases in 2012. He said the state's piecemeal review of individual applications amounts to "death by a thousand cuts" of sensitive wilderness areas.

"They're not looking at the bigger picture," Olson said, noting that it is the state's constitutional duty to consider the impact of drilling begins with the leasing process.

But Dan Boch, the lawyer representing the DNR, said the agency was following the law when it auctioned of "non-development" leases that do not allow for drilling or exploration. Protests should only be raised if and when oil companies apply for drilling permits on the land they leased, he said, and no permits have been sought since the sale.

"Ample evidence" of bid-rigging

(Continued from Page 1)

faces a top fine of \$1 million on each of the two criminal conspiracy counts.

DNR officials have reportedly analyzed the sale results and testified that Encana was the sole bidder on 75 percent of the leases Encana won, while Chesapeake was the sole bidder on 91 percent of the leases it won, according to the attorney general's office.



North Woods Notes

(Continued from Page 1)

JUNE NRC MEETING: The June 12 meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) will be held at the Michigan State University Diagnostic Center, 4125 Beaumont Road, in Lansing. The Sept. 11 and Nov. 6 meetings will also be held at that same location, while the Oct. 9 meeting will be at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, 104 Conservation Drive, on Higgins Lake near Roscommon. Other NRC meetings during 2014 will be July 10 at the Outdoor Adventure and Discovery Center, 1801 Atwater Street in Detroit; Aug. 14 at the American Legion, 610 W. Munising Avenue in Munising; and Dec. 11 at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue in Lansing.

ENBRIDGE RESPONDS: Enbridge company representatives reportedly met recently with state officials in Lansing and provided a significant amount of information requested in a recent letter from Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette and Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Director Dan Wyant. As reported in the late May edition of *The North Woods Call*, Schuette and Wyant had asked for extensive documentation about the known condition, monitoring and maintenance practices relating to two 61-year-old pipelines that lie at the bottom of the Straits of Mackinac.

MANURE SPRAYING: While reportedly a rare practice these days, spraying manure on farm fields has taken on new urgency as more large dairy farms consider doing so. A Wisconsin group is studying whether to toughen regulation of manure irrigation, according to a story in the *Great Lakes Echo*. The practice is regulated under current law with restrictions on spraying too close to homes and wells, the online publication said.

DWINDLING ICE: Lake Superior was still about three percent covered with ice, according to a report issued on May 20. The areas packed with frozen water included the head of the lake and the Apostle Islands—more than has been seen during late May in the past 40 years.

CEDARS FOR THE CEDAR: Cedar trees were recently planted along Gladwin County's Cedar River, one of the highest-quality trout streams in the Saginaw River Watershed. A local partnership of 75 Gladwin High School botany students, Department of Natural Resources staff, and volunteers from the Leon P. Martuch Chapter of Trout Unlimited and The Little Forks Conservancy planted 100 cedar saplings along the Cedar River.

BUD SLINGERLEND: Most of you probably already know this, because we're almost a year late acknowledging the passing of Michigan conservationist and former state representative Bud Slingerlend. In addition to his service in the Michigan House of Representatives, he was a member of numerous sportsmen's, hunting, trapping and conservation clubs—serving many in the capacity of president or director, including as past president of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC). He also was a longtime member of the Pigeon River Advisory Council. Much too late, we know, but still worth mentioning.

DEER LAKE: The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has sent the U.S. EPA a letter asking the federal agency to remove Deer Lake in Ishpeming from the federal list of environmental Areas of Concern.

Anglers asked to monitor bait

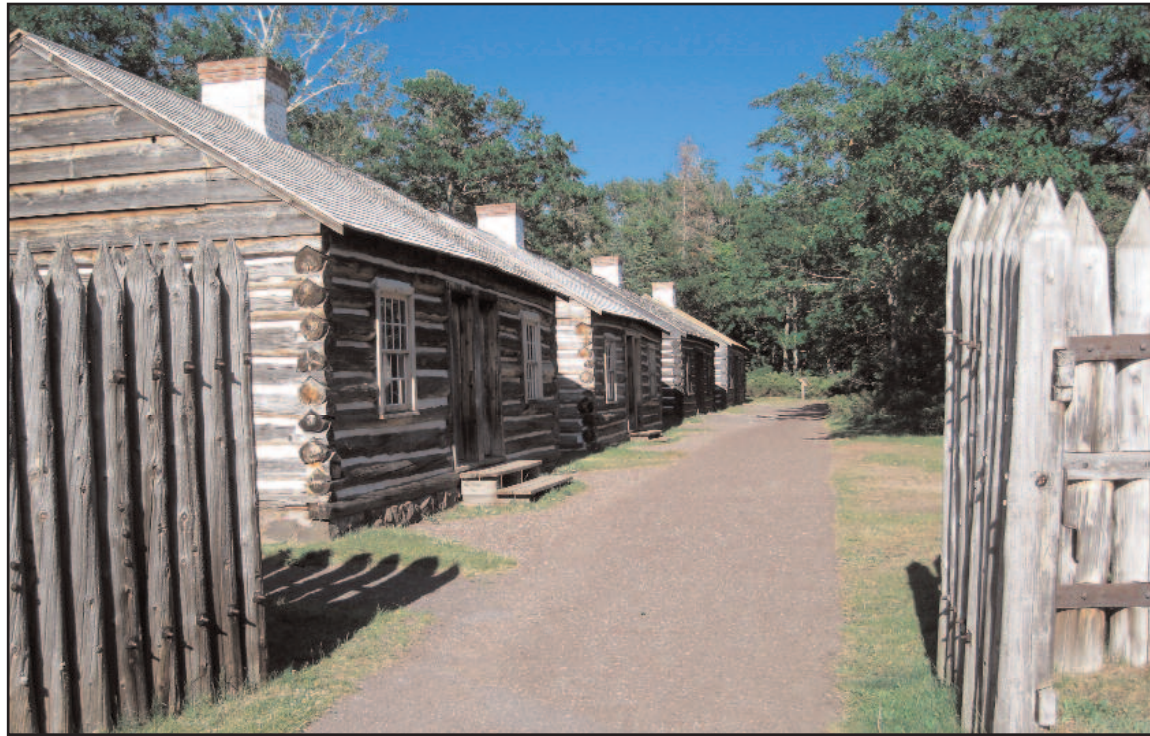
Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) officials have asked anglers to monitor their live bait purchases to look for juvenile Asian carp.

"The DNR is doing many things to prevent adult Asian carp (bighead and silver) from entering the Great Lakes, but many people don't realize that juvenile Asian carp pose a threat to the state's waters as well," said Nick Popoff, DNR fisheries biologist and regulatory affairs specialist.

According to Popoff, juvenile Asian carp can be confused with common bait fish – such as gizzard shad, emerald shiner, spot-tail shiner or golden shiner. "Because bait is often transported across state lines, including from areas with breeding populations of Asian carp," Popoff said, "it would be easy for juvenile Asian carp to make their way into the bait supply without anyone realizing it."

To assist anglers and the public in identifying juvenile Asian carp, the DNR has developed a video that showcases five characteristics viewers can use to distinguish between juvenile Asian carp (bighead and silver) and common bait fish. These characteristics include body color, scale pattern, eye size and location, mouth shape and location, and the presence or absence of keels on the bottom side of the fish.

People can watch the video on the DNR's Asian carp website: www.michigan.gov/asian-carp. The video also describes what anglers should do if they find an odd fish in their bait.



Old Fort Wilkins

Historic Fort Wilkins at the tip of Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula beckons summer visitors to explore some of the state's past. Below, the early June afternoon sunlight illuminates the interior to one of many buildings that have been restored and opened for viewing by history buffs. There's a campground next door and it's only a short bike ride into Copper Harbor.

—North Woods Call photos



Researchers look at PBB & health in Michigan's Gratiot County

Researchers from Emory University in Georgia have returned to Michigan's Gratiot County to continue to examine whether the health of residents and chemical plant workers was harmed from chemical contamination that occurred during the 1970s.

The concern is whether contamination left by the Velsicol Chemical Co. in St. Louis, Michigan, has long-term health consequences for the county's residents.

A total of 280 community members participated in two days of blood drawing and a 10-day reproductive health screening clinic in March.

The study stems from when PBB — polybrominated biphenyls — manufactured at the former Velsicol plant was accidentally mixed into cattle feed used on farms throughout the state in the 1970s.

People who ate the contaminated meat, and chemical workers and their family members may have traces of PBB and other chemicals produced at the plant in their bloodstreams, said Marcus.

Marcus said her team has already seen health problems in some of its previous research.

"We did find that there were more cases of breast cancer among highly exposed women than you would expect in a population of this size," said Marcus. "We also found increased risk of thyroid problems, particularly among men."

To hunt, or not to hunt, Michigan wolves

Now that there are at least two anti-wolf hunting proposals on the November ballot and petition signatures for another proposal supporting the activity are being collected, it might be helpful to take a closer look at the two sides of this issue.

Keep Michigan Wolves Protected, the group pushing for repeal of the state's wolf-hunting season, says a "trophy hunt" is an unnecessary waste. No one eats wolves, anyway, the group says, and such a season may subject wolves to cruel and unsporting practices. Further, the public is not in danger and wolves are an invaluable part of Michigan's ecosystem.

The group also claims there is no sound science to justify such a hunt, which represents an "egregious power grab" by the Michigan Natural Resources Commission of authority once held by the state legislature.

"Michigan voters clearly value their right to protect wildlife from unsporting and inhumane practices," according to a fact sheet issued by the organization. "In 2006, they overwhelmingly rejected a law to allow sport hunting of mourning doves. And in late March of 2013, our coalition of Michigan citizens, conservationists, Native American tribes, scientists, veterinarians, and animal welfare groups turned in more than 255,000 signatures from Michigan voters to place Public Act 520 of 2012, which designated the wolf as a game species, on the November 2014 ballot for a referendum vote.

"[The state's] voters deserve to have a voice in how our wildlife is managed. We can't rely on politicians, bureaucrats and special interest groups to make decisions without voter oversight. We need checks and balances to ensure our wildlife, which is held in the public trust, will be managed with the best available science."

The Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC), which is challenging the repeal effort, says Keep Michigan Wolves Protected had fewer signa-

tures (183,000) on their second referendum petition than their first, showing diminishing public support. Citizens for Professional Wildlife Management—the alternative effort supported by the MUCC that prefers the legislation known as "The Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act"—will collect more than 350,000 signatures, the organization says, a larger number than either of the anti-hunting efforts did.

Two straight polls show public support for the wolf hunt over 67 percent, according to the MUCC.

"The Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act will make sure that decisions about game species and fisheries orders are based on sound science," MUCC officials said in a recent news release, "which can only be assured at the Natural Resources Commission, where they are required to use sound science, rather than misleading political ads financed by out-of-state anti-hunting groups.

"The Keep Michigan Wolves Protected referendums are funded, organized and staffed by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). HSUS opposes public hunting rights, as it states on its website. It opposes all hunting for "fun, trophy or sport," (and it always claims the hunting seasons it attacks are for "fun, trophy or sport," even when clearly authorized by state biologists for food, fur, population and habitat management, property protection or human safety). It opposes all hunting with dogs, and [says] that any killing of wildlife must only be done by "responsible officials." In other words, not by licensed hunters."

Keep Michigan Wolves Protected, however, says these efforts to stop wolf hunting are not about restricting hunting rights. The Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act is about trying to "block voter voices on wildlife protection," the group has said.

Much more debate on this issue will undoubtedly occur leading up to this fall's election.

Chronicler of the far north

Canadian author Farley Mowat dies

Farley Mowat, one of Canada's most popular and prolific writers who championed wildlife and native rights, died May 6 at the age of 92.

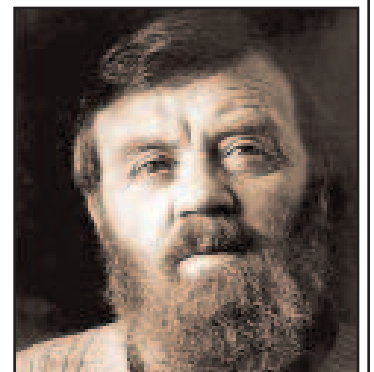
Mowat—a lifelong naturalist who wrote some 40 books—was perhaps most widely known for his 1963 book "Never Cry Wolf," in which he recounted his adventures as a biologist on a solo mission in 1946 to study Arctic wolves in the Keewatin Barren Lands in northern Manitoba. The book provoked widespread debate over its sympathetic portrayal of an animal that many Canadians thought should be exterminated.

He also wrote such classics as "People of the Deer," a 1952 book about the struggles of an Inuit group in the Northwest Territories, and a follow-up book entitled "The Desperate People."

He was sometimes criticized for playing loose with the facts, but defended the practice saying he never let the facts stand in the way of truth. He blurred the lines between fiction and non-fiction, he said, to dramatize his cause.

"I was writing subjective non-fiction all along," Mowat told an interviewer in 2012.

Never one to shy away from controversy, Mowat was outspo-



Farley Mowat in younger years

ken about many environmental and social issues. He called Canada's treatment of aboriginals "abominable," and said Canada's annual seal hunt was, "perhaps the most atrocious single trespass by human beings against the living world that's taking place today."

A frequent guest on Canadian television and radio, he had taken time out recently to appear on a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio program to condemn a plan to set up Internet hot spots in several of Canada's national parks.

Calling it a "disastrous, quite stupid, idiotic concept," Mowat said that parks should be for the preservation of nature.

"Human beings," he added, "should be kept out of them as much as possible."

Opinion

Quote Box

“Human beings are, of course, a part of nature, as much so as grizzly bears, or bees, or whales, or sorghum cane. The cities of human beings are as natural, being a product of one form of nature, as are the colonies of prairie dogs, or the beds of oysters. ... Dull, inert cities, it is true, do contain the seeds of their own destruction. But lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves.”

—Jane Jacobs

If it ain't broke, don't fix it

The ongoing debate over the planned removal of a perched culvert in Dickinson County's Schwartz Creek reminds of the old saying, “If it ain't broke, don't fix it.”

And some Michigan anglers insist that the pristine Upper Peninsula tributary stream—one of the headwaters of the Escanaba River's West Branch—ain't broke.

In fact, it's “one of the best of the best” brook trout streams in the state, they say, and there's no need to chance destroying the premium habitat on a whim (see Viewpoint article on Page 5 of this edition).

We agree.

Just because some \$100,000 in federal grant money is available for the project and partners—such as the Escanaba River Watershed Project, the Michigan Chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Dickinson County Sportsmen's Club, Northern Michigan University's fisheries program, the Trout and Salmon Foundation, and an anonymous local hunting and fishing club—support the effort, there is no need to go ahead with it. The plan should be rejected.

Nobody knows the river and its treasures better than those who wade its waters and traverse its banks. That's why we prefer to listen to the proddings of dedicated anglers—those without connections in high places of power—who are urging restraint.

The stream has more than five miles of water without a bridge over it, we're told, and nothing needs to be done to improve stream quality.

We hope state officials and any others who must give the OK for this project are not influenced by special interests, and instead listen to the voices of sportsmen who have spent their lives fishing Schwartz Creek, and know its beauty and character.

North Woods Call reader survey

Response to the 2014 *North Woods Call* reader survey has been somewhat anemic. We take that to mean you are either satisfied, or too polite to complain.

Of the seven responses we received so far, comments have included “It's great,” “now the *Call* is fair and balanced” and “I like the diversity and timeliness of natural resources-related news.”

One reader added that he appreciates our focus on the “ethical,” even if it isn't popular. “This should be our highest calling,” he said. “More of us sportsmen need it. [John] Gunnell gets it.”

On the critical side, we were told that we don't need so many editorials and columns on things not related to current natural resources-related news, especially from individuals other than the editor. “They're nice to read now and then,” one person said, “but I'd rather have the space taken up with news we can use.”

Another respondent said that most of the news covered is about things he already knows. “How can you get ahead of issues and happenings?” he asked, while another individual suggested more information about “pending legislation” and what readers can do to help.

We suppose the answer to that last question lies in resources and staffing. When *The Call* has a greater abundance of both, there will naturally be more enterprise in our reporting and additional ability to get ahead of things that need to be covered.

Unfortunately, there is only so much a small mom-and-pop operation can do with a relatively small number of subscribers.

“I fully realize the value of a paper that focuses on conservation issues,” said one reader. “I wish more did the same.”

So do we.

We look forward to the day when *The Call* can grow beyond these current constraints and better serve the conservation community. In the meantime, we very much appreciate the enthusiasm and support we do have, as well as this input from readers.

Editor's Note: Future shock & us

Our immediate family received some shocking health-related news recently that is causing us to reassess our lives, priorities and time commitments.

We do not yet know what this all means, but it could impact our ability to continue publishing *The North Woods Call*.

If so, this might provide an opportunity for some other qualified party to take over the operation—and maybe even move the business back to northern Michigan where it belongs.

No decisions have yet been made, but if you know of someone who might be interested in pursuing such an opportunity, please let us know.

More information about this will likely be shared soon.

Man & climate change: Seeing is believing?

Some folks tell me that man-made climate change is the most important issue facing humanity.

Others claim that this is a bunch of bunk.

Personally, I have no reliable way of knowing for sure, but—as readers of *The North Woods Call* have already seen—I'm a bit skeptical when it comes to the current doomsday scenarios.

It's not that I don't respect sound science, and I've long been suspicious of the Faustian bargains we've made with fossil fuels, nuclear energy and a host of other technologies. Like most everyone else, I'd love to see greener, cleaner and more affordable forms of energy developed.

But I tend to form opinions based on my own experiences, personal knowledge (as limited as that may be) and critical thinking. And I haven't seen anything concrete that convinces me that human activity is significantly altering our weather and climate.

Does that make me a climate change “denier” worthy of name-calling and scorn, or should all sides of this debate be equally aired in the civic arena?

I suppose I could have my dunderhead submerged in a vat of mulligan stew, but I don't think so. If I do, I stand waiting to be extracted from my ignorance. But that is going to take reason and logic—not the yammerings of corrupt politicians, or the self-interested measurements of academic grant seekers who rely on funding from government agencies and private foundations to produce research studies that are all too often subservient to slanted ideological agendas.

In my six-plus decades on earth, I have spent a considerable amount of time out-of-doors. Through the years, I've seen both hot and cold summers, warm and sub-zero winters, wet and dry seasons, high and low Great Lakes water levels, tornadoes, hurricanes and numerous other natural disasters.

I've heard the older folks talk about the Dust Bowl of the 1930s and read about it in Steinbeck's “The Grapes of Wrath” (one of my all-time favorite books). But my father has also described to me the harsh winter of 1936—at the height of the Great Depression—when he and his mother waded in waste-deep snow to deliver groceries to his stranded grandfather on a rural farm.

I've read about droughts, famines, floods and other environmental calamities occurring way back in biblical times—long before the Wright Brothers tested

The NW Call: A dedicated defender

Editor:

As a subscriber for many decades, I appreciate *The Call*'s consistent effort to protect and preserve northern Michigan's beauty, wildlife, quiet trails and streams, the enchantment of its seasons and solitude.

I also value *The Call*'s quest to alert our residents of questionable, harmful and—in some cases ille-

North Woods Journal

By Mike VanBuren



their first airplane at Kitty Hawk and Henry Ford pushed the first Model A off the assembly line in Detroit.

Heck, I even live on a sand and gravel hill deposited during the last Ice Age when glaciers receded across Michigan. Two summers ago it was so hot and dry that my lawn was scorched, and has never recovered. Yet, this spring, we are still reeling from one of the coldest, snowiest winters on record.

For 20 years, my family and I spent a week each August camping in one of Michigan's fine state parks. The first several years, it was so hot and humid that we sweated and suffered whenever we pitched camp, or sat around the evening campfires (back when climate change was typically referred to as “global warming”). The last five or six years that we camped, however, it was decidedly cooler at the same location and we sometimes had to wear sweatshirts during the evening.

All of these things can be attributed to climate change, I suppose—or at least evolving weather patterns. But how many of them were actually caused by human activity that would suggest we're in imminent danger of mass chaos and death if we don't clean up our ecological acts?

None of this, of course, means that air, water and land pollution doesn't occur at various levels, or that human beings are not capable of fouling the earth. Such homo sapien missteps certainly have manifested themselves at places like Love Canal, Three Mile Island and Donora, Pennsylvania—among other locations.

And if something as serious as man-made climate change is actually occurring on a level that threatens our very survival, we need to sound a clarion alarm. But we should also be encouraged to challenge such assertions.

It's not unreasonable to expect that clear and convincing arguments be made—free from political gamesmanship, and the demonization of anyone who questions the veracity of these “facts.”

Who has ever known a trained meteorologist who could predict next week's weather with 100 percent accuracy? Why, then, would we accept without question the prognostications of what the worldwide climate will be like

gal—attempts by various entities to encroach and lessen the serenity of these ageless and sacred wonders.

Where can we find a more dedicated defender of what so many of us hold so dear?

Bill Pearson
Fort Myers Beach, Florida

decades, or even centuries from now? And why, for Heaven's sake, would we base costly carbon tax schemes and excessive liberty squelching regulations on political and scientific guesswork—however educated it may seem to be—that may well be proven false and, in some cases, already has.

Back when I studied weather and climate as part of my conservation minor at Central Michigan University, nothing was said about global warming, or climate change. Instead, we learned about the natural forces that shaped our physical environment and how, at best, we could count on the weather changing from day-to-day. Anybody who thought they could unequivocally tell us what the weather would be like a month, or year, from now would have been ostracized as something akin to Elmer Gantry. These days, old Elmer is embraced.

I'm not omniscient enough to say without hesitation who is most correct on this issue. But then, few people—if any—are.

The best we can do is rely on our own intuition, personal experiences and powers of reason to sort through the various theories. Unfortunately, normal public discourse is notoriously unreliable—especially when those making the most noise appear to have stealth motivations that have nothing to do with saving Mother Earth.

Nevertheless, we ought to be able to speak like adults about such subjects and seek the truth wherever it may be found.

As it is, we seem to be collectively living the words of Julia Ward Howe's “Battle Hymn of the Republic” by “trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.”

And the fruit of anger we are harvesting stems more from selfish ambition and human-generated antipathy toward one another, rather than unquestionable empirical evidence that shows our often confused species is destroying the planet.

Which, by the way, actually belongs to God, not us.

The North Woods Call

Michigan's Conservation Sentinel
Since 1953

Published regularly by:
Newshound Productions LLC
5411 East DE Avenue
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49004.

Telephone: (269) 342-8724

E-mail: editor@mynorthwoodscall.com

Website: mynorthwoodscall.com

Online subscription: \$35 per year
and \$60 for two years.

Print subscription: \$55 per year
and \$95 for two years

Editor & Publisher: Mike VanBuren

Publishers Emeritus:
Marguerite Gahagan
Glen and Mary Lou Sheppard

Advertising rates available on request

A Newshound Publication

Share your thoughts in *The Call*

Viewpoint

The Schwartz Creek conundrum: Knowing when to leave nature alone

By John Gunnell

Growing up in Kent County, Michigan, during the 1940s, I took for granted that my trout fishing haunts would never disappear. I treasured such gifts of nature that were believed by me to be permanent and never-ending.

Little did I realize back then that men with influence could and did destroy nature to achieve their purposes.

As an adult, I came to the conclusion that I must seek out new places where fewer men lived who chose to invoke their will on the landscape. Finding such places today that remain outside man's purview for wanting to alter them is difficult. This brief preview of where I am coming from on the "Schwartz Creek Conundrum" is a glimpse at what "brung me to this dance."

My familiarity with Schwartz Creek came about many years ago as a young man, after having purchased property in its locale in the Upper Peninsula's Dickinson County. My notion in writing about Schwartz Creek is not to simply discount those who advance ideas for expanding her function to provide an increase flow of colder water for the network of streams she feeds. At stake for me is that the project in its simplicity is lacking any convincing evidence to confirm that an expanded drawdown will leave the Schwartz as the Schwartz it is today.

Ronald Reagan suggested we must "trust, but verify." My friends in high places—including those from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Trout Unlimited, etc.—see little downside in replacing culverts on the Schwartz. However, of those who speak with such certainty, none to my knowledge have ever trekked her—

let alone fished her—to discover her uniqueness.

Her becoming just another memory—like the sad song lyrics, "There used to be a ball park right there"—reminds me of my experiences referenced previously as a boy growing up. We have no crystal ball for predicting the effect of water tampering on the Schwartz's thriving native brook trout population, which includes a secret impenetrable network of deep-water hideouts.

Not to overkill with clichés for confirming my concerns, I include "one in the hand is worth two in the bush," which reminds me of man once again trying to improve upon something already proven.

Knowing when to leave nature "unchanged, or fixed by man" allows us to slow down, discover and appreciate her unduplicated marvels.

I liken the proposed replacement culverts—along with asphalt roadways—with unnecessarily speeding up the demise of that which by example defines another historic mosaic of the Upper Peninsula. It makes "yoopers" question further the sanity of those of us who would ever want to live below the bridge in the "Lower Peculiar."

Getting back to the Schwartz, she intersects a continuous low land area with intermittent tag alters and poplar trees peculiar to boggy terrain. Long ago, it attracted beaver and brook trout, both favoring the presence of cold water. The land surface is blanketed with tall grass, cattails and other plants indigenous to such topography. It is ideal for beaver, with dammed pools serving as playgrounds for brookies.

The stream makes its way generally northwest for approximately six miles to in-

tersect the Flood Wood Road. The Schwartz picks up some additional inlet water in its path from O'Neil Lake Creek. Her terrain is near impossible to walk, due to its continuous bog-like conditions that border the stream and reach out well beyond the actual stream's meanderings.

Increasing the flow by repositioning new, larger culverts up to six miles from Schwartz Creek Dam to achieve measurable flow and cooler water below Flood Wood Road is a stretch—to say nothing of the potential unwanted reconfiguration of its upstream route.

Many outdoor people are silently suspicious of another human alteration of perhaps the best native habitat for brook trout in the Upper Peninsula. Man-contrived cosmetic solutions and "quick fixes"—especially with easy money for dams, dredging, culverts, etc.—have repeatedly destroyed, or seriously damaged far too many natural streams in the name of doing the public's bidding in the State of Michigan.

This proposed project raises the question of gaining any measurable benefit for an estimated \$100,000 investment. Fixing something (ie. Schwartz Creek water flow) resonates as another example of using tax dollars for an inconclusive and potentially destructive result. The federal government is once again complicit in providing funding for a cosmetic expenditure that tampers with Mother Nature's environs. The feds are often mesmerized with superficial evidence and have a questionable track record for funding such nebulous projects.

The DNR, while aware of the proposed project, seems quietly convinced of the hoped-for result, yet publicly remains less

than encouraging for those who are intimately concerned with Schwartz Creek. The "other guy's dollar" may also weigh toward approval by the DNR.

Improving stream flow with resultant success by replacing a non-existing perched culvert to achieve improved water temperature is further evidence of a project crying out for deserved rejection.

Money only often serves as an artificial fix, keeping hands clean without much human investment. Federal money suggests that other alternatives were less appealing. It must be further realized that Trout Unlimited is not without its "do gooders" motivated primarily to gain self-recognition, as confirmed by those speaking from within its ranks.

At this writing—after discussion with Trout Unlimited members and interested anglers, and reading the write-up on the proposed project—I remain unconvinced that tampering with Schwartz Creek's water flow as proposed could improve upon its primary purpose for existing already as one of the few remaining fine breeding habitats in Michigan for native brook trout.

Assisting trout in connecting streams with flow increase and marginally improved water temperature change (if any) remains a "What price glory?" question. Existing stream obstruction, erosion, etc. affecting connecting streams further negates much bang for the other guy's buck within the proposed project.

John Gunnell is a writer and outdoorsman living in Rockford, Michigan.

Who speaks for nature?

Rulings by local judges in Barry and Allegan counties—dismissing citizen lawsuits against the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) over the sale of oil and gas leases in state game/recreation areas—got us thinking about former U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas.

Douglas believed that natural resources themselves should have legal standing to sue for their own preservation and that it is legitimate for those who hunt, fish, camp, hike, visit and otherwise use natural areas to act as spokespeople for these areas.

This, we believe, is what Michigan Air Land Water Defense was attempting to do in its legal action against the DNR.

In the 1972 case of Sierra Club vs. Morton—in which the Sierra Club sued to stop a ski resort planned in the southern Sierra Nevada range—Douglas eloquently wrote the dissenting opinion when the high court dismissed that case because the club had failed to allege that the development would harm the club, its programs, or its members and therefore lacked "standing" to sue.

"Inanimate objects are sometimes parties to litigation," Douglas wrote. "... So (Continued on Page 6)

Hex hatch 2: A tragicomedy on the Au Sable River

Recently, I introduced readers to fishing the hex hatch as played out in front of our river house on the Au Sable.

Now, I am pleased to present Hex Hatch 2, which could be described as a three-act tragicomedy.

To set the scene, it is Father's Day weekend 2013, which coincided with hex hatch. These special bugs just happen to love our portion of the river and, if you love fly-fishing, you might surmise that trout also would be attracted to our waters. I can't tell you where; it's apparently a state secret.

On to our performance:

Act I: Friday Night

My husband, Joe, a true family man—and I say that with great sincerity—pulls out his list of preferred Father's Day weekend activities, which he shares in their great abundance. I sigh heavily, knowing that he would be lucky to get the list accomplished by summer's end, let alone the conclusion of the weekend.

After putting world peace on hold, Joe decides that a lovely dinner while playing our current favorite game, Catan, would be a wonderful use of the remainder of Friday eve. Frankly, I am amazed because we've been told that the hex could show their little faces at ANY MOMENT! This beautiful evening practically screams for a night fish. However, the family dude puts family first and we sit down to a late dinner of turkey

River Reflections
By Betsy Hayhow Hemming

chili and the game.

For those not familiar with Catan, it is a game of strategy, requiring a significant investment in time and deep thinking. But on this night, right outside our dining room, a miracle is happening. Yes, the hex are hatching and the fish are noticing. As the hex start to emerge from the river, many make their way to the outdoor lights on the deck, right in Joe's gun sights. Coincidentally, he starts to make poor game choices. To add insult to injury, the sound of a reel comes in clear as a bell. A large splash follows. Joe goes silent. Our daughter wins the game. Joe exits right, closes the bedroom door and calls it a night.

Act II: Saturday Night

Following a day of admiring the massive hex collection on our exterior walls, Joe plots for an evening of fishing in the river. His wife and daughters are in full support after his sacrifices of the previous night, and one of his fishing pals arrives raring to go.

The fishermen sit on the dock in full fishing regalia, enjoying tales of past successes, until dusk emerges and fishing commences. The girls settle in for a lovely movie. Afterwards we head to bed, knowing that the fishing will continue for some hours. I drift

asleep to the sound of gentle murmuring from the river and an occasional splash.

Suddenly, I awake with a large snort. A body which turns out to belong to my husband is sitting on me, while he goes through the dresser next to the bed. "I must have dry clothes; I am FREEZING," he says. I lean over and pull out a pair of shorts and he departs. I assume the fishing has concluded and story-telling will continue, so I head back to sleep.

As expected, I am the first one up and I make some initial observations. First, the hex hanging on the walls is a reduced bunch compared to the day before. Second, a large array of very wet, dirty clothing covers our deck benches, suggesting some sort of issue from the night before. I anticipate the story to come.

Joe arises looking the worse for wear, and we learn that indeed fishing had been a struggle. He also took two dunks in the river. I am not amused. Cue unamused wife look. After the second dunk, Joe wisely removed himself from the river and headed to the deck to get out of his gear. Unfortunately, he forgot that we had created a new fire pit that day and tripped over it in the dark. The good news was that we had not yet used it, so no burning embers inflicted

harm. The bad news was that his fishing rod went down with him and did not come out unscathed. Finally, my suspicions were true; the evening had not gone down in the annals of history as one of the grand hex fishing nights.

Act III: Sunday Night

Our last act is short and bitter-sweet. After a day of drying clothes, finding fly rod tips and celebrating the father in our lives, we had a truly lovely dinner of perch and shrimp, and offered Joe a few humble Father's Day gifts. He thanked us profusely and offered up a toast to the day, to the family, and to the river.

It was a beautiful evening and the river was practically begging Joe to come and play with the trout. Alas, our hero was forced to exit stage left into a car instead, and head home due to an urgent work matter. Even worse, his three girls remained at the river for another night, enjoying the sweet sounds of the fisher people as they heeded the call of the river. We didn't mention that the hex count was way up in the daily census the following morning.

The happy ending is that Joe was able to return to the river a short two days later, for a real fishing adventure with three buddies. Those stories could result in Hex Hatch 3.

Have I mentioned that I don't make any of this up? Can rivers chuckle?

Tell your friends about *The North Woods Call*



All Outdoors

By Mark Karaba

The essence of spring

As I watch the "greening up process" here in southern Michigan, I am overwhelmed with options of seasonal, necessary chores, or the many items on the "to do list" that present themselves this time of year.

Some of the obligatory options would be the lawn, preparing the garden, trimming shrubs, or transplanting the white pine trees that did not get planted in their final resting place last year. And the list goes on.

However, as of the last week in April, the warblers have returned. So have the rose-breasted grosbeaks. This ritual cannot be ignored. These birds need to be "watched."

Also, the mayflies are hatching on the nearby creeks, and this event will cause a chain reaction in the trout population, which also requires attention.

The smallmouth bass are in the pre-spawn stage and are willing to attack the streamers I spent all winter tying.

It is also the time when the black morels will be popping out and, well, this year could be epic for mushrooms. Either way, you have to look.

There is the trip to the cabin in Grayling and the Au Sable, if only to follow the birds and the mayfly hatch, as we observe the migration north of spring itself!

This perpetual malady we see as "spring fever"—in my case at least—is not caused by the extended period of daylight, or the warming temperatures alone. No, it is caused by the anticipation of joyful options in the out-of-doors. It is most likely brought on by the realization that the woods, the rivers and streams here in Michigan, are once again alive, and being re-born with opportunities to explore and seek soul-cleansing satisfaction, that makes us endure the hardships of winter—and sometimes life in general.

I do not look forward to the lawn, the trimming, or pruning. Or even the garden. This is just something we do. These house and garden chores are not unpleasant or dreaded. They can be very satisfying and ultimately bring about very gratifying results. The lawn being neatly kept and mowed. The garden bearing fruit.

This is all good. But it does not stir in me, personally, an emotional response equal to the sound of a bird song I have not heard for many months. Or the ring on the water caused by a trout rising to a mayfly. Or the pleasure I take in being in a canoe for the first time of this year.

I pity the souls that look forward to spring as a time of lawn fertilization and garden preparation only, when the trees above them are full of colorful birds, filled with song—all trying to out-do the other males vying for mates. Or those amongst us who never take the time or have the inclination, to walk in the woods, even under the guise of mushroom hunting.

For it is the springtime that those of us who care about birds and trout and mayflies and wildflowers live for. This is OUR time of the year. This is the NEW YEAR!

Who should speak for nature?

(Continued from Page 5)

it should be as respects valleys, alpine meadows, rivers, lakes, estuaries, beaches, ridges, groves of trees, swampland, or even air that feels the destructive pressures of modern technology and modern life. ... Those who have that intimate relation with the inanimate object about to be injured, polluted, or otherwise despoiled are its legitimate spokesmen.

"... The problem is to make certain that the inanimate objects, which are the very core of American's beauty, have spokesmen before they are destroyed. It is, of course, true that most of them are under the control of a federal or state agency. The standards given those agencies are usually expressed in terms of the "public interest." Yet "public interest" has so many differing shades of meaning as to be quite meaningless on the environmental front. ... [And] the pressures on agencies for favorable action one way or the other are enormous.

"... The federal agencies of which I speak are not venal, or corrupt, but they are notoriously under the control of powerful interests who manipulate them through advisory committees, or friendly working relations, or who have that natural affinity with the agency which in time develops between the regulator and the regulated.

"... Before these priceless bits of Americana (such as a valley, an alpine meadow, a river, or a lake) are forever lost—or are so transformed as to be reduced to the eventual rubble of our urban environment—the voice of the existing beneficiaries of these environmental wonders should be heard.

"... That is why these environmental issues should be tendered by the inanimate object itself. Then there will be assurances that all the forms of life which it represents will stand before the court—the pileated woodpecker, as well as the coyote and bear; the lemmings, as well as the trout in the streams. Those inarticulate members of the ecological group cannot speak, but those people who have so frequented the place as to know its values and wonders will be able to speak for the entire ecological community."

Amen. Let's remember that when citizen voices speak.



The Songs of Springtime

—Photo by Mark Karaba

Numerous songbirds—such as this myrtle warbler photographed near Grayling—have returned to Michigan for another summer of singing and nesting. It is just one of the enchanting signs of spring that lovers of the state's outdoor heritage look forward to each year. See Mark Karaba's column at left for others.

Check out the spring color at your feeders

It's that time of year—time to check out the spring color at your bird feeders. Or, as I call it, how to make a cardinal look drab.

With the influx of migrating birds, we are getting all the summer residents, as well as those that are only passing through.

The most colorful of these is the Baltimore oriole. The bright orange and contrasting black make our feeders just come alive with color. If you haven't fed orioles before, you will be in for a treat. The easiest and quickest way to attract them is to cut a few oranges in half and place them around and on your feeders. Once they are coming, you can keep them at least until nesting with special oriole feeders, or hummingbird feeders that don't have bee guards. If they do have bee guards and you can remove them, do so.

You use the same nectar formula as for hummingbirds—one part (1/4 cup) sugar to 4 parts (1 cup) water. No coloring should be used. Never use diet sweeteners or honey.

Along with the Baltimore oriole, many of you will get the orchard oriole. The orioles also like grape jelly, and will readily take it from a tuna tin, or cat food tin. A good number of birds—such as the catbird—will take the jelly.

The male orchard oriole is a brick orange color with black and the female is a lime green. The orchard oriole is not quite as abundant around Michigan as the Baltimore oriole is.

Letter to the editor

Just think of all the jobs created by fracking

Editor:

Does fracking for gas and oil really produce jobs for our economy? Let's take a look.

Fracking is a risky technology. Pipeline leaks, explosions, spills, etc., release toxic chemicals into our environment. All this contamination must be cleaned up. This means more jobs!

Unless, of course, the contamination occurs in a wildlife sanctuary, or impoverished neighborhood, in which case we have to make do with volunteers to clean up the mess. But even then, volunteers must eat, so money is spent in the local economy to buy food. Health care providers must be hired to treat people when injuries or exposure occurs. Lawyers must be hired for resulting lawsuits, and more

The Natural World

By Richard Schinkel



Those of you that have water-front property—either a lake or stream—are very likely to get the orioles as they prefer the cottonwoods for nesting and use the cotton from both the cottonwood and willow trees to build their nests.

Both orioles have the hanging basket type net nest, although the orchard oriole's is less deep.

As if this color isn't enough, the American goldfinches have molted to their bright black and yellow, and have returned to the northern parts of Michigan.

Also showing up at our feeders for a while will be the rose-breasted grosbeak. The male is a striking black with a white front and a bright red "kerchief" around its neck. The song is quite sweet, much like the robin, only faster and more melodious.

Those of you who feed thistle will also be treated to the bright purple male indigo bunting. Although primarily an insect eater, it feeds on thistle (nyjer) as it arrives from migration. Often they will continue at the feeders into nesting season in early June.

Of course, the colorful ruby-throated hummingbirds are back and giving us great pleasure, too. And, if your landscaping has any number of shrubs, you may get a rufous-sided towhee.

The male towhee is black

above with rusty (rufous) sides and white underparts, and the eye is red. The female replaces the black with brown. You will see them scratching beneath your feeders. The call is unique with a clear "drink your teeee." When it first arrives the towhee may only give the drink call, then add the "your" and finally the whole song.

Probably one of the most surprising birds to come to our thistle feeder in the spring is the indigo bunting. This little bird, upon its arrival, will visit your thistle feeder until nesting. The male, as the name indicates, is a bright indigo or blue color. The indigo bunting is small, similar in size to the American goldfinch. The female is a dull brown with no striking characteristics. They typically nest in dense brambles or shrubs.

The song of the bunting is a series of double phrases and they sing for nearly the entire summer. We typically identify them by using the mnemonic "fire fire, where where, there there, put it out quick, put it out quick."

If you want to attract the colorful warblers, the easiest way is to have some type of water feature—preferably one that makes noise—but a plain bird bath will work.

Whatever you do, enjoy the colors at the feeders and afield.

lawyers to defend the industry against the lawsuits.

Families forced to leave their homes due to contaminated water wells, noise, air pollution and associated health problems due to fracking provide a boost to the hotel industry, create more jobs for moving van companies and sometimes even new house construction.

Fracking has created water shortages in many communities. What a wonderful opportunity this provides for the bottled water industry job creators! And manufacturers of plastic bottles. And the trucks to transport the bottled water. The possibilities just seem endless!

Public relations experts must be hired to "sell" un-

(Continued on Page 7)

Conservation Officer Logs (4/13/14 through 4/27/14)**Four-wheel damage, floating gas tanks, smart-phone purchases and a lost child****DISTRICT 1 (Marquette)**

COs Dave Miller and Trey Luce worked a patrol together in Baraga County. The COs discovered several tracks in the snow on the Herman-Nestoria Road. Upon investigating the activity, a jeep was located a short time later, broken down on the trail. The operator of the jeep had been hill climbing on the steep sides of the road when his transfer case broke, leaving a trail of fluid behind. The jeep did extensive damage to the sides of the hill, which were privately owned. Likewise, several beer cans were found littered around the jeep. The owner was tracked down and a ticket was issued to the driver, whose license is suspended, for the litter found at the site. Other charges are pending for the damage done to the private land.

CO Mark Leadman investigated the complaint of a deer being mauled by a dog at Harlow Lake. The complainant stated that the deer, which had been chased down by a dog, had a chunk of flesh missing from its hind quarter. CO Leadman was unable to locate the injured deer, but encountered several persons in the area walking with dogs without leashes. CO Leadman issued warnings on all of the violations, reminding the dog owners of regulations for state land.

DISTRICT 2 (Newberry)

CO Michael Evink was called out on Easter morning to assist the Michigan State Police and Manistique Public Safety. It appeared a few individuals had stolen two trucks and used them to tear up the state-owned Wyman Nursery, then left both trucks at the site. The drivers of the trucks did extensive damage to the nursery irrigation system and to fields. The joint investigation is ongoing.

CO Kevin Postma received information of a subject who took too many bobcats. The CO was able to locate and interview the suspect, and receive a full confession that an extra bobcat was indeed harvested. Warrants are being sought in the case.

DISTRICT 3 (Gaylord)

CO Eric Bottorff received a recreational trespass complaint in-

volving trout anglers that, according to the complainant, had been warned not to use his property. CO Bottorff located footprints that went directly past "No Trespassing" signs and under a cable. When contacted, the angler stated he didn't see any "No Trespassing" signs. He admitted walking underneath the cable, but maintained he did not see any signs. CO Bottorff went back and photographed 14 "No Trespassing" signs that were visible where the subject entered the private land.

CO Carl VanderWall investigated a deer carcass dumping complaint at the terminus of a dead end road. Along with the deer carcass was a bag of trash, in which CO VanderWall found one piece of evidence that led to several interviews and finally to a suspect, who denied dumping the carcass. The subject told the CO that the deer carcass must have accidentally fallen out of his truck while he was doing donuts at the road ending. When advised a warrant for reckless driving could be pursued, the subject admitted dumping off the carcass and trash. A ticket for littering was issued.

DISTRICT 4 (Cadillac)

COs Steve Converse, Brian Lebel, Sam Koscinski, Jeff Ginn, and Sgt. Michael Bomay responded to state of emergency requests from Osceola and Newaygo Counties for flooding conditions along the Muskegon River. The COs assisted the counties' Emergency Management Teams by removing residential propane tanks that were floating and drifting away from homes along the river. The propane tanks were then shuttled downstream to access sites and removed for re-installation once the water levels dropped.

CO Angela Greenway received a complaint of a sow bear with three cubs up a tree just off the shoulder of U.S. 10. The mother bear created a large traffic jam on both sides of the roadway. CO Greenway responded to the scene, activated her emergency lights and kept traffic flowing. The DNR Wildlife Division was contacted and employees responded to monitor the bear's activities until night fall. The sow bear began her descent down out of the tree with the cubs following. Wildlife Division employees then vacated the area allowing the bear to leave. The next morning, CO Greenway received a call that



a sow bear had been struck and killed by a vehicle on U.S. 10. CO Greenway responded and found the sow bear dead and the three cubs back up the tree. CO Greenway again contacted Wildlife Division and with the assistance of two local tree trimmers—**CO Brian Brosky** and **Sgt. Michael Bomay**—the three cubs were removed from the tree safely. Wildlife Division employees will attempt to place the cubs with surrogate sow bears.

DISTRICT 5 (Roscommon)

CO Warren MacNeill was requested to respond to a complaint of a stabbing victim. After dealing with several excited family members and securing the scene, the CO was able to make contact with the victim in a bathroom of the residence. The stab wounds to the throat were self-inflicted with scissors. CO MacNeill administered first aid to the victim until Emergency Medical Services (EMS) arrived on scene.

DISTRICT 6 (Bay City)

CO Quincy Gowenlock was at the Center Street boat launch for the walleye opener. While at the launch checking subjects coming in, a young man came running down the bank. He informed the CO that he heard yelling downstream and that a boat was possibly capsized. CO Gowenlock yelled to a passing angler in his boat and had him speed down past the bridge to assist. He then drove his patrol truck onto the bridge and observed a capsized vessel and several other vessels assisting with the rescue. The two occupants were pulled into other boats and transported back to the landing. While at the landing the operator stated their boat was overloaded with gear. He went on to explain that, while under way, the small vessel came into choppy water from other vessels and the bow began to bounce. With each bounce, the boat took on water

and, with this new added weight, it forced the bow under the water line and the boat overturned. Mobile Medical Response (MMR) arrived on scene and both the occupants were cleared with only complaints of being cold. Both subjects collected what was left of their gear and went home cancelling the rest of their fishing trip.

Friday night before the walleye opener, **COs Jeremy Payne and Joel Lundberg** were checking the area of Baily Bridge along the Tittabawassee River for any walleye anglers starting early. The COs found a group of anglers casting for walleye at 10:00 p.m., two hours before the season opened. When the COs made contact, the anglers had their poles put away and denied fishing. One of the anglers then asked one of the COs what he had on his head. The CO stated that it was night vision equipment. The anglers then hung their heads and no longer denied what the COs saw. Tickets were issued.

DISTRICT 7 (Plainwell)

CO Brad Brewer and Sgt. Zachary Doss were called to assist a MSP trooper who had been called to an incident where three subjects in kayaks had entered the complainant's property and had destroyed a nest full of Canada goose eggs. CO Brewer and Sgt. Doss interviewed the suspects and obtained confessions regarding the destruction of the eggs. Enforcement action was taken for destroying the Canada goose eggs, along with marine violations for failing to have life preservers while kayaking.

CO Steve Mooney and Sgt. Zachary Doss located a vehicle parked near a tributary that held a large number of steelhead. A woman was inside the vehicle and stated that her boyfriend was fishing on the stream. The boyfriend appeared shortly and walked through a yard along the stream posted "No Trespassing." He was also using a treble hook on the stream, which is restricted to single hooks only due to extensive snagging problems. The subject was ticketed for the fishing violation and warned for the trespass issues.

DISTRICT 8 (Rose Lake)

CO Todd Thorn was working a patrol along Sycamore Creek in Lansing and watched a man fishing in a location where he had re-

cently received a complaint of snagging. The man was observed for about 10 minutes before he was contacted. Upon contact, the angler stated that he was not fishing, and when asked for his fishing license, stated it was in his car. The subject's identity was attained and a check of the computer license system revealed that the subject had not purchased a fishing license in two years. CO Thorn then told the man to pack up his fishing equipment and meet him on the path approximately 100 yards away. The angler took his time gathering up his equipment and, when he finally arrived at the COs location, he produced a smart phone and stated that he had proof that he had a fishing license. The man showed CO Thorn the phone, which showed that he had purchased two 24-hour fishing licenses, a 72-hour fishing license, and a regular fishing license at 11:27 a.m. (the current time was 11:29 a.m.). The man had spent nearly \$150 on licenses after his initial contact with the CO, while packing up his gear, not realizing that the time of purchase appeared on his license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jeff Goss checked several fishing spots along the Battle Creek and the Kalamazoo rivers. CO Goss observed a man fishing and then overheard him telling his buddy how stupid he was for paying \$26 for a fishing license. When CO Goss stepped out of the brush the guy's buddy didn't feel so stupid anymore. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 9 (Southfield)

CO Todd Szyska received a RAP complaint that a subject had been shooting robins in the Emmett area. CO Szyska met with the complainant, retrieved 10 deceased robins and walked a drainage creek, where he found four carcasses that were floating. The CO then made contact with the suspect, who admitted to shooting at "black-type birds" that were defecating on his car. CO Szyska explained to the subject that shooting and killing nongame birds was against the law. He further explained that robins were songbirds and that they did not cause much harm, if any. The robins were shot with a high powered pellet gun. A warrant is being sought on the matter.

BELLE ISLE

CO Pete Purdy assisted MSP troopers on Belle Isle with a 911 call regarding a one-year-old child found walking unsupervised in the street near a play area. The caller attempted to locate the child's parents for 30 minutes before calling. CO Purdy and MSP troopers began searching the area for the child's parents. Eventually, CO Purdy discovered a woman sleeping in the back of a van. CO Purdy asked if she had children in the area. The woman advised she did and that she knew where all her children were. It turned out the woman actually was the lost child's mother. The matter has been turned over to Child Protective Services for resolution.

Warbler return to be celebrated

A special reception will be held June 12 to celebrate the return of the Kirtland's warbler to its northern Michigan nesting grounds.

The "Kirtland's Warbler Home Opener," hosted by the Huron Pines organization, will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Grayling Ramada Inn.

The event will feature master birder Greg Miller as keynote speaker and will bring together those people who are passionate about, or simply interested in, Kirtland's warbler conservation.

It is an opportunity to meet other like-minded individuals and spread the story of work being done to protect the species.

Just think of all the jobs created by fracking

(Continued from Page 6)

safe fracking technology to the public. Lawyers are needed to defeat attempts by local government to protect their citizens through anti-fracking ordinances. A new, burgeoning industry has developed to help corporate job creators defeat attempts by communities to install renewable energy programs and initiatives. After all, how can money be made on a product such as the sun or wind, which is readily available to everyone?

What about long-term job growth? It's a win-win situation. Fossil fuels pump ever-increasing amounts of climate-changing gases into our atmosphere, causing more severe storms with property damage and injuries. Again, people must be hired

to clean up the mess, to rebuild, and to care for the injured. Even the pharmaceutical industry benefits as people buy anti-anxiety drugs to deal with stress. Mental health workers can get in on the economic gravy train as more people become depressed and need counseling!

As a society, we should embrace the fracking industry and the endless job-creating opportunities they provide. After all, earth could get struck by an asteroid that destroys all life at any time. In which case there is really no reason to worry about future generations.

Anne Zukowski
Charlevoix, Michigan

Final Shot



Keweenaw Country

The rocky shoreline of Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula accents the deep blue waters of Lake Superior along M-26 near Eagle Harbor. There's much natural beauty in this region, as well as a rich abundance of cultural and mining history.

—North Woods Call photo

Fisheries research vessels begin annual Great Lakes fish survey

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced that all four of its fisheries research vessels are back on the water, beginning to survey Great Lakes fish populations.

Annual surveys conducted by the DNR Fisheries Division's research vessels are designed to examine the relative abundance, total amount in weight, growth, health, diet, survival rates, natural reproduction and movements of fish in the Great Lakes. This information is vital in supporting the DNR's mission to conserve, protect and manage the billion-

dollar Great Lakes fishery resource for the use and enjoyment of current and future generations, and continues evaluation work begun in the 1960s.

Research vessels are homeported in Marquette, Alpena, Charlevoix and Harrison Township, but work throughout the lakes on a variety of assessments and evaluations.

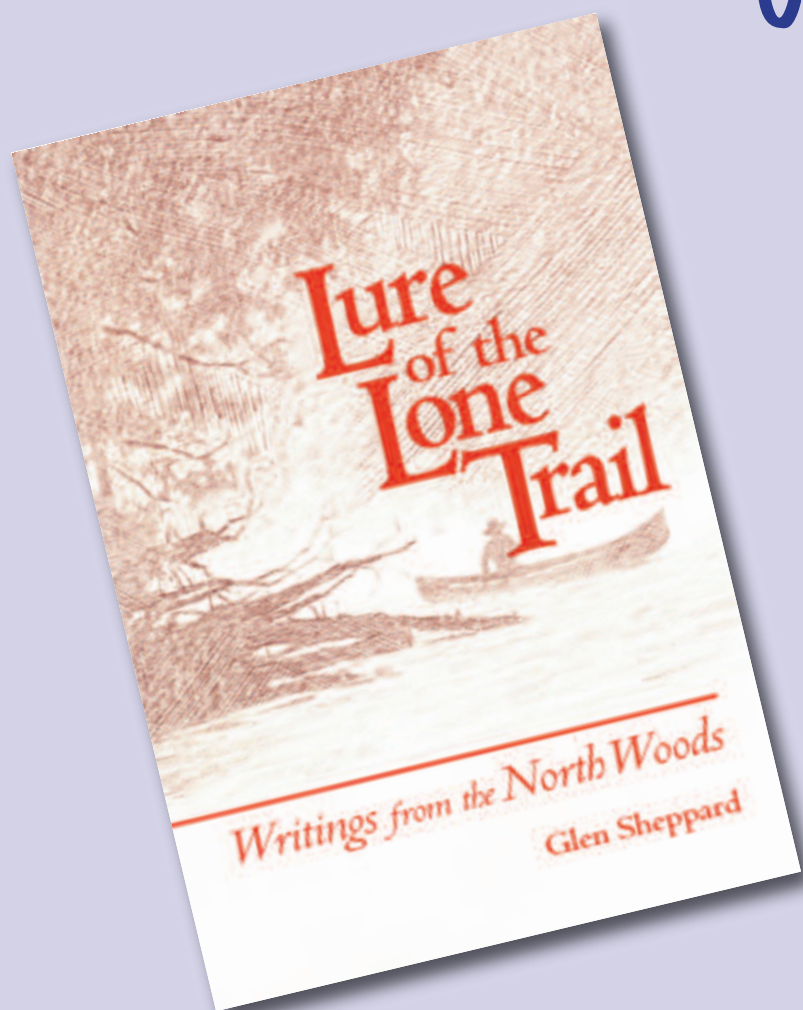
Additional information about other science vessel operations throughout the Great Lakes can be found at the Great Lakes Association of Science Ships website, www.canamglass.org.

Coal still king of electric generation

Even as environmental groups push for alternative energy sources across the Great Lakes Basin—and as some lawmakers encourage efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions—most energy powering homes still comes from coal-fired generators

In fact, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio were all in the top five coal destinations in the United States during the fourth quarter of 2013, according to a recent article in the *Great Lakes Echo*.

Only a handful left Get yours today!



If you don't have a personal copy of this collection of writings by longtime *North Woods Call* Publisher Glen Sheppard there are still a few available.

Order yours today.

The book is out-of-print, but we picked up a handful of new copies from Shep's estate and are offering them for sale until they are gone.

Check our website for availability and ordering information:

www.mynorthwoodscall.com

DNR invites public input on forest plans

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will host open houses in Gaylord and Indian River to provide information and receive public comment on proposed forest management treatments for 2016 in the Gaylord management unit.

The unit includes Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Mackinac and Otsego counties.

The open houses are set for:

* Tuesday, June 17, from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Gaylord Field Office, 1732 West M-32, Gaylord.

* Wednesday, June 18, from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Indian River Field Office, 6984 Wilson Road, Indian River

Each year, DNR personnel evaluate one-tenth of the state forest. The inventory provides key decision-making information for foresters and wildlife, fisheries and other resource managers. The age, health, quality and quantity of trees and other vegetation are assessed to enable DNR staff to make informed decisions.

Timber management, wildlife and fisheries habitat, minerals, archeological sites, recreational use, wildfire potential and social concerns are just some of the topics taken into consideration during this review.

Support *The North Woods Call* and Michigan conservation

Advertise your business here!

Contact: editor@mynorthwoodscall.com

Help compile *The North Woods Call* history

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

editor@mynorthwoodscall.com

Get your
North Woods Call
t-shirts & caps
mynorthwoodscall.com