Fall turkey permit availability in 2014 will be equal to the number offered during the 2013 fall season. A total of 96,700 permits will be available statewide, with permits allocated to specific turkey management zones based on the amount of habitat available and relative size of turkey population.

Fall permit levels are set by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources after review by the Turkey Advisory Committee, a group that includes representatives from the department and numerous partner organizations with an interest in Wisconsin’s wild turkey resource.

Zone-specific fall 2014 permit levels are as follows:

- Zone 1: 27,500;
- Zone 2: 18,000;
- Zone 3: 30,000;
- Zone 4: 15,000;
- Zone 5: 3,800;
- Zone 6: 1,400; and
- Zone 7: 1,000.

“The pursuit of turkeys in the fall provides a different experience from the spring hunt,” said DNR assistant upland wildlife ecologist Krista McGinley. “Getting out there in the fall allows hunters to experience the Wisconsin woods and engage with the birds during a different part of their annual cycle when different hunting techniques are required.”

Spring permit levels were reduced in northern zones 6 and 7 for the 2014 season in response to an extremely harsh winter. Overall, spring harvest was down only slightly in the north. While the department recorded some mortalities likely associated with a harsh winter, it became apparent that this mortality was localized and occurred where flocks were trapped by deep snow in areas without accessible food sources.

“We certainly heard from hunters who were concerned that this past winter might significantly impact our northern turkey flock,” said Walter. “In some counties, total registered hen harvest was in the single digits - these very low hen harvests are well below the level capable of influencing population abundance.”

According to Walter, since all permits are utilized in the northern zones, every permit not allocated would lead to one hunter that would not be able to pursue turkeys in that zone in 2014. A permit reduction would provide no benefits for the turkey population, so a reduction in hunting opportunity is not necessary.

For more details regarding Wisconsin’s fall turkey season, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword “turkey.”
New Board Members Sworn In

G REEN LAKE, Wis. – A fresh-water salmon sought by some anglers for its fight and “catchability,” being considered for possible introduction into Wisconsin waters through an effort involving Green Lake area stakeholders and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The landlocked Atlantic salmon has previously been introduced to inland lakes in Maine and Michigan and a feasibility initiative to stock the fish in Big Green Lake is being proposed by the Green Lake Coldwater Fish Advisory Committee. The proposal has been reviewed by DNR’s Fish Management Board and will now move forward for public comment with an information meeting and hearing set for Sept. 9 in Green Lake.

David Bartz, the local DNR fisheries biologist assisting with the evaluation efforts, said the Green Lake group’s proposal to stock the fish holds strong appeal for some anglers, but the initiative requires careful consideration to ensure no harm would come to the area’s already healthy fishery, including the lake’s native cisco population. To that end, DNR has prepared a draft environmental impact statement and is inviting public comment on the proposed introduction.

“We appreciate the ideas and leadership of the Green Lake Coldwater Fishery Advisory Committee on this initiative and DNR will now seek additional citizen input,” Bartz said. “Entirely local citizens are encouraged to attend the public information meeting and hearing scheduled for September” and also may submit written comments.

During the meeting, a member of the Green Lake Coldwater Fisheries Advisory Committee, said his group has been looking for a landlocked Atlantic salmon to be a way to add another dimension to the area’s sport fishery.

The landlocked Atlantic salmon has a reputation as an exciting catch, frequently breaking the surface when hooked, Siders said. “With its cold, deep-water is moderately clear. Trout, Walleye and Catfish. The lake’s

Conservation Leadership Corp

We have selected 14 young members from throughout the state, colleges, and high schools and we are now arranging our first group meeting for September, 2014. This is our second year going forth and we have set some of our plans for the year already. Our first meeting will be September 26th & 27th with Randy Stark, retired DVR chief warden for Wisconsin and working on another speaker.

On October 18th & 19th we will be holding our meeting in Portage and on Saturday visiting the Aldo Leopold Center and possibly the Crane Foundation. On December 5th & 6th we will be back at the Holiday Inn in Stevens Point. We are working plans for that weekend.

Our goal is to guide youth members to become leaders on conservation issues and some day take over for our leaders who no longer can serve in that position.

Respectfully submitted by Lauralee CLC Chair

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Chair Message</th>
<th>Conservation Leadership Corp</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please find enclosed the renewal form for your club. We are asking that you send in your renewal at your earliest convenience over the next couple of months. The renewal will cover your membership for all of 2015. We have also enclosed information on the benefits to your organization by being an affiliate member of the WWF and also information on some of the accomplishments we have had recently on behalf of Wisconsin sportmen and women. If you have any questions about your renewal, please call Kim Lang, the WWF Business Manager, at 920-623-9975 or myself at 608-516-5545. Thank you again for your interest and support of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. Sincerely yours, George Meyer Executive Director</td>
<td>We are a new organization including a Jon boat, trailer, $1000 the first of each month, except May when the boat is drawn for Check out the calendar for more exciting items besides the 119 guns and Mathews how. Be sure to turn in your stubs and monies early to beat the rush at the end of sales. Sincerely yours in conservation, Lil Popping, Calendar Chair</td>
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Time for Affiliate Club Renewal

Dear Club Leader,

Rec: Club Membership Renewal

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation greatly values your club’s membership in the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. The 190 hunting, fishing, trapping and forestry-related organizations that are Wisconsin and working on another speaker. Big Green Lake is a destination fishery for all of 2015. The renewal will cover your membership to the same date, we were not going to ask you to renew on your normal renewal date in 2014. As a result all of the WWF Affiliate Clubs now have the same membership start date of January 1, 2015. This was done to make the renewal process simpler for affiliate clubs and the WWF.

Well we are now into our 2nd month of calendar sales. I hope that you have found a new outlet for selling them also. Remember if you need more calendars to please contact Kim at the office by e-mail to: kim@wwf.org or call 920-623-9975. There are many new items in this calendar including a Jon boat, motor & trailer, $1000 the first of each month, except May when the boat is drawn for. Check out the calendar for more exciting items besides the 119 guns and Mathews bow. Be sure to turn in your stubs and monies early to beat the rush at the end of sales. Sincerely yours in conservation, Lil Popping, Calendar Chair

Calendar Chair Message
2014 Waterfowl Season Framework

60 Day Season – 6 ducks, no more than 4 mallards (only 1 may be a hen), 3 wood ducks, 1 black duck, 2 redheads, 3 scaup, 2 pintail and 1 canvasback, 5 mergansers, not more than 2 hooded. Coot daily bag of 15.

Opening Day shooting hours begin at 9 am.

Duck Season Dates

Youth Hunt: Sept. 20 and 21
North Zone: Sept. 27 – Nov. 25
Mississippi Zone: Sept. 27 – Oct. 5 & Oct. 18 – Dec. 7

Goose Season Dates

Exterior Zone: 92 days total. Daily Bag of 2
• North – Sept. 16 – Dec. 16
• South – Sept. 16 – Oct. 12 & Oct. 18 – Dec. 21
• Miss. – Sept. 27 – Oct. 5 & Oct. 18 – Jan. 8
Horizon Zone: 2 periods. Daily Bag of 2. 12 tags per hunter
• H1 – Sept. 16 – Oct. 26
• H2 – Oct. 27 – Dec. 16

It is important to note that possession limits have been increased to three times the daily bag limit.

2014 Spring Waterfowl Surveys Reflect Mostly Good to Excellent Breeding Populations

By Kent Van Horn, DNR Migratory Game Bird Ecologist

MADISON – Waterfowl breeding populations in 2014 are among the most good to excellent in Wisconsin and North America, according to recent surveys by state, federal and Canadian wildlife officials.

The surveys were conducted by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The USFWS survey showed the highest total of North American duck population estimates in the 59-year history of the survey. While some recent variations in state level waterfowl surveys are difficult to interpret overall, we have excellent news regarding waterfowl populations in North America,” said Kent Van Horn, DNR migratory waterfowl biologist.

“Population data is good to excellent across North America with good wetland conditions to support promising local and continental duck and goose populations.”

The full report is available by searching “USFWS waterfowl population” on your computer.

In addition to Wisconsin’s breeding population study, two additional sources of information regarding yearly waterfowl breeding conditions are used to determine fall season structure.

A cooperative survey organized by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources provides annual data on Canada geese. Roughly 60 percent of Wisconsin’s regular goose season harvest is supported by Canada geese nesting in northern Ontario.

A final piece of supplemental information is provided by the USFWS through their breeding waterfowl survey for the northern U.S., Canada and Alaska.

Ducks

Waterfowl breeding areas in North America showed mostly good to excellent conditions in 2014. The quality of duck breeding is expected to be high overall.

Wetland conditions were on the rise in all regions of Wisconsin’s breeding waterfowl survey - this should provide good breeding habitat. However, widespread flooding, a late winter and irregular migration timing impacted survey conditions and created challenges in generating state population estimates.

The four most abundant ducks in Wisconsin’s spring hunting harvest make up close to 75 percent of the total harvest and include mallards, wood ducks, green-winged teal and blue-winged teal.

Van Horn notes that “many of the mallards and wood ducks harvested in Wisconsin are from boreal forests in Canada while about two-thirds of the blue-winged teal harvested in Wisconsin are raised in other prairie regions.

Most green-winged teal migrate into Wisconsin from boreal forests in Canada.

The recent trend of wet conditions, increasing duck numbers and liberal regulations is very exciting,” said Van Horn.

“Many older waterfowl hunters have experienced years with drought, shorter seasons and low breeding populations. For the past 10 years, surveys of many agencies, conservation organizations and hunters, we have placed ourselves in a position to enjoy great hunting all over the continent.

In Wisconsin, the spring waterfowl survey provided mixed results, with a total breeding population estimate of roughly 395,000 ducks. This estimate shows a decrease from 2013 and is below the long term average.

“These are population estimates, not exact counts, so changes of 20 percent (whether an increase or decrease) may not reflect any real change in the actual population and are best viewed as trends,” Van Horn said.

The trend in the total breeding duck population in Wisconsin has been relatively consistent the last ten years in the range of 500,000 total ducks. The mallard and wood duck portions of this state total have provided more stable contributions, while the blue-winged teal and “other duck” survey estimates have been more variable.

Mallards are the number one duck in the fall bag, accounting for nearly 40 percent of the total fall duck harvest in Wisconsin. The 2014 continental mallard population estimate of 10.9 million is the second highest on record. The Wisconsin mallard population estimate of 159,000 is statistically unchanged from 2013 and consistent with a stable trend experienced over the past ten years.

The second most abundant duck in Wisconsin, registering at close to 20 percent of the total fall harvest, is the wood duck. The 2014 breeding population estimate of 164,000 is similar to 2013 and consistent with a stable trend experienced over the last five years.

“The continental blue-winged teal estimate of 5.5 million was the third highest for that species, while the 2014 Wisconsin blue-winged teal breeding population estimate of 34,000 is down from 2013. A trend in the state population estimate for blue-winged teal for the last 10 years is evident due to the wide range of survey issues and high annual variation in population estimates.

Conservation funding and the efforts of Wisconsin’s waterfowl hunters have protected and managed wetland and upland habitats crucial to the maintenance of these breeding duck populations statewide.

Canada Geese

The 2014 Wisconsin breeding Canada goose population estimate of 128,000 was similar to 2013 and the average spanning the last decade. Wisconsin’s resident breeding Canada goose population may be stabilizing at 120,000 after a long term increase.

“We expect a healthy Canada goose population this fall, particularly for the Early September Canada goose season (Sept. 1-15) with a five-bird daily bag limit, which makes up one-third of our total statewide goose harvest,” said Van Horn. According to Van Horn, two populations of Canada geese represent most of the geese in Wisconsin during the fall. Wisconsin’s locally breeding Canada goose population of 53,000 makes up 40 percent of the harvest for the early season from Sept. 1-15, and about 40 percent of the harvest during the later regular goose season.

Most of the remaining 60 percent of regular season goose harvest is supported by a second population of Canada geese that breed along the Hudson Bay coast in northern Ontario. Although Wisconsin shares this population with other states, it is unique in that these birds congregate over half of the state’s annual harvest. In neighboring states, like Minnesota, locally breeding birds comprise the majority of harvest. This breeding population of Canada geese appears to be at normal levels, with an estimated 2014 breeding population of 323,099. These data are similar to estimates in 2013 and the long term average.

Overall, 2014 looks to be an excellent year for duck and Canada goose populations. With survey data now available, federal and state biologists are conducting analyses and harvest projections to help form hunting season structure in the coming weeks. As a part of this process, DNR staff will meet with state, federal and provincial agencies at the Mississippi Flyway Council meeting in late July. Following the council meeting and USFWS Regulations Committee meetings, these organizations will use further coordination to guide 2014 waterfowl hunting regulations.
DNR staff encourage hunters to participate in interactive chats

**New Crossbow Deer Hunting Season**

**Shooting Range Grant Program Is Under Way**

**Friends of Payette Game Farm to Host Learn to Hunt Pheasant Programs**

**MADISON** – With some major rule changes coming for this year’s deer season, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is encouraging hunting license buyers to help make sure hunters are ready for another great deer season.

New this year, any individual purchasing a hunting license is eligible for any qualified hunter to purchase. Previously, only disabled individuals, members of Native American tribes, or those authorized by the secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources could buy the license for a friend.

The new rule, which was approved by the Natural Resources Board at its September meeting, will run concurrent with the regular archer season. During open season firearm season, hunters may purchase a crossbow license.

**Fish Feats Captured Through Coded Wire Tag Project**

**WISCONSIN** – In a remarkable feat of distance swimming, tiny salmonids released in Lake Michigan have been seen way out in the Straits of Mackinac and down through Lake Huron, and off the coast of Racine, according to newly released data shared with the help of Wisconsin anglers.

Brad Eggold, Lake Michigan fisheries supervisor for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, said the 400 mile journey made by the fish highlights the potential for natural reproduction of chinooks passed through the Great Lakes.

“By releasing the smolts during the spawning season and the fish moving south to the Straits of Mackinac and down through Lake Huron, we’re helping to prove that natural reproduction of chinooks is not only possible, but that this population now comes from natural reproduction levels well above 50 percent,” Eggold said.

What makes these findings possible? Fish heads – containing tiny coded wire tags used to track the fish – have been collected from anglers and dropped off at key points along Lake Michigan’s shoreline.

The tags, which are embedded in the skull of the fish, are immediately identified when and where the fish were stocked. The tags themselves are smaller than a fine sliver of pencil lead, yet when entered into a database maintained by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service scientists, they provide a powerful narrative about the fish’s movements and the areas they visit.

“We could not undertake this type of research without the support of an educated and dedicated corps of anglers willing to save the fish heads and bring them to us in their point of capture,” Eggold said. “The head collectors provide fishers with an excellent way to provide incredible insights into the life of these fish and the effect of human actions on the population now comes from natural reproduction.”

While the natural reproduction data varies somewhat by year – in part due to inconsistencies in the number of fish heads coming back – the data tracking fish swimming from 2006 to 2011 indicates natural reproduction of chinooks passed through the Great Lakes is a possibility. However, these results represent good news for anglers, wildlife managers and anyone funding to support biological research, as fisheries managers will continue to fine-tune stocking strategies based on the latest scientific data.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, through a cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, is working to avoid overlap between licensing systems to help make sure hunters are ready for another great deer season.

**MADISON** – Private shooting range operators in Wisconsin will again be eligible for DNR partnerships to fund finance range improvements and development projects in exchange for the ranges offering shooting opportunities to the public. The Depart- ment of Natural Resources (DNR) received $325,000 available as cost share, according to DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp.

The money comes from the State’s Wildlife Restoration grant – commonly known as the Pittman-Robertson funds – and is generated by a 10 or 11 percent excise tax on firearms and ammunition. The tax was enacted in 1937, with the last year.

“We’re so pleased to be able to use this money, which is generated by hunters and shooters, to improve shooting opportunities,” Stepp said.

With an estimated 800,000 shooters and hunters in Wisconsin and recent strong growth in interest in shooting, providing access to safe, quality places to shoot is a priority for the department.

“The best place for someone to learn to shoot and to enjoy the sport is outdoors, in a well-managed and maintained range,” Stepp said. “This grant program will help range operators in the state’s clubs provide high quality opportunities around the state.

The Shooting Range Grant Program can cost share between 50 and 75 percent of approved range development and improvement costs depending upon the amount of public access allowed. Counties, cities, villages, townships, other governmental agencies or units, clubs or organizations, or school districts are eligible to apply.

Eligible projects include but are not limited to: backstop and safety wall construction, enforcement of internal and external ranges, safety meetings, range improvements, signage, protective fencing, storage areas, baffle systems, parking, accessible pathways, and support facilities. Project costs must be commensurate with benefit. Indoor ranges will be considered for funding at the department’s discretion.

Grant winners must comply with federal and state laws and must have as the primary purpose to “teach the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to be a responsible gun owner, to maintain firearm and archery ranges that are safe for the public use.” Ranges must be open to the public (non-members) a minimum of 100 days per year. Range operators may apply for the available amount of $325,000 for a reasonable period of time.

At the completion of each project all facilities related to the grant must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the National Rifle Association’s Hunter and Shooter Protection Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the National Historic Preservation Act and other federal requirements as appropriate.

**Timeline**

The range grant guidance document and application will be available on August 15 by searching the DNR website for “find grants” and then the link for “shooting range grants.” Applications must be submitted electronically by November 17. A team will evaluate, rank, and recommend projects to Secretary Stepp’s office, which will give final approval of all projects. Applicants will receive notification by Jan. 15, 2015 of the outcome.

**Project ranking**

Grant applications will be scored on many factors. First, the department will look at the range to population centers and the land area the range will provide. Other factors include the demonstration of need, amount of public access allowed, public education need, size of the project, and number of different shooting opportunities at the facility.

“One of the most obvious needs is to increase opportunities for shooters and hunters close to home,” according to Keith Warnek, DNR hunting and shooting administrator.

“Two factors contribute to the success of a shooting range,” Warnek said. “The first is proximity. Our few public ranges in southeastern Wisconsin are heavily used and in addition to looking to build new public ranges, we believe that partnering with private ranges, we can expand access to shooting and improve the facilities for everyone who uses them.”

**Crossbow Deer Hunting Season is Under Way**

**Friends of Payette Game Farm to Host Learn to Hunt Pheasant Programs**

**Parents or legal guardians are encouraged to participate.**

Dates and target audiences for the Wisconsin Conservation Club’s pheasant programs include:

- Dec. 12-13 - open to any individual with no pheasant hunting experience. Parents or legal guardians are encouraged to participate.

In 2014, over 70,000 pheasants from the Payette Game Farm will be released on over 80 public hunting grounds. The FGPF is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing pheasant hunting opportunities and promoting Wisconsin’s strong upland bird hunting tradition.

**Sportsmen’s Committee**

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Wisconsin Conservation September 2014

Advisory Councils Deer Hunting Rule Changes for 2014

SOURCE: DNR Call Center - 1-888-936-7465 - August 27, 2014

Question 1: What are the DNR County Deer Advisory Councils that we’ve been hearing about?

Answer: Composed of stakeholders at the county level, the advisory council was recommended during the Deer Trustees Report review as a means of providing input on herd management at the local level. These councils will be tasked with using a variety of information gathered through various means to make herd management recommendations for their county to the DNR. Councils will make recommendations for the 2015 deer season.

Question 2: Where can I read more about Minnesota county councils?

Answer: Read this DNR News story about the new councils.

County Deer Advisory Councils Will Provide Great Opportunity for Local Input and Deer Herd Management Throughout Wisconsin

Planning for the 2015 deer hunting season is underway at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Congress encourages anyone interested in discussing their local deer herd to attend a County Deer Advisory Council meeting this fall.

Each CDAC will meet in September, October, and December to determine a three-year deer population goal in increase, decrease, or stabilize.

“County Deer Advisory Councils will give the opportunity to become directly involved in managing deer in their county,” said Kevin Wallenfang, DNR big game ecologist. “The creation of CDACs is something that has never been done before—we’re anxious and excited to be working with a wide range of stakeholders.”

In 2014, council meetings will be held at designated locations in 72 counties. Meeting locations will be arranged locally, and all will begin at 7 p.m. Each council is made up of members who represent various stakeholder groups impacted by deer, including hunters, tourism, agriculture, and local government. Each council meeting will be chaired by a Conservation Council designee.

DNR County Deer Advisory Councils are part of an effort to provide for more public input on deer management issues. Members of the council groups have greater responsibility in managing local deer numbers.

Council meetings will develop recommendations to the DNR regarding deer population objectives in their respective counties, antlerless quotas, and season structure options. Through their participation, CDAC members and meeting participants will provide a direct stake in managing Wisconsin’s deer herd.

These meetings will be held this fall, as well as every three years, to develop deer herd population objectives and strategies for managing the local deer herd. Councils will meet each spring to develop antlerless deer harvest quotas for deer hunting seasons and consider various strategies to meet population objectives.

Local department staff will be on hand to present information and answer any questions and discuss possible strategies for managing the local deer herd.

“Those unable to attend a local meeting will be able to view meeting agendas and minutes on the department’s website,” said Wallenfang.

To find a meeting location in your area and learn more about County Deer Advisory Councils, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword “CDAC.”

Public Comment Period Open for Rapidie Croche Boat Transfer Station - Fox River

R EKEN RAY – A proposed boat transfer system on the Fox River near the Rapidie Croche Dam that would also decontaminate boats going up river for aquatic invasive species is the subject of a recently completed environmental analysis available for public review and comment.

As part of Wisconsin statute, the Rapidie Croche Lock must remain closed to prevent aquatic invasive species from moving upstream. The Fox River Navigational System Authority is authorized by the State of Wisconsin to repair, reopen, operate, and maintain the 17 of locks on the Lower Fox River. Because this lock is closed, the authority has proposed to construct the boat transfer system for aquatic invasive species decontamination station at this site near the Outagamie and Brown County border.

The proposed system will lift boats up to 55 feet in length either by a truck fork (boats less than 30 feet long) or mobile hoist to be sprayed by a high pressure water hose and then placed into a hot water bath where they will be circulated to all areas where water contacts the boat for up to 10 minutes before being transferred upstream of Rapidie Croche Dam. Boats moving downstream will not be sprayed.

As part of Wisconsin’s assessment, the Rapidie Croche Dam is going to be decontaminated for four separate species of aquatic invasive species: zebra mussel, quagga mussel, round goby, and ole stuffer.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is accepting comments on the environmental analysis of the proposed transfer and decontamination system that is available by searching the DNR website, dnr.wi.gov, for keywords “environmental impact analysis” and “environmental analysis” for “current RIA documents” under the Public Involvement tab.

Public comments, either written or oral, on the environmental analysis are welcome until 4:00 p.m. on October 1, 2014. All comments should be submitted to Janet Doseperski Jr. by September 15, 2014. A public meeting will be held at the City of Appleton City Hall, 900 Liberty Hall, 800 Eisenhower Dr, Kimberly, on August 27, 2014.

The proposed system will be a lift system that will be used for the computerization, analysis, and future usage of the above mentioned aquatic invasive species. The proposed lift system is available from Jan Doseperski Jr. at 920-662-5119, or by email at Doseperski@wi.gov.

State Tree Nurseries in Market for Seeds; Landowner OK Needed to Pick Seeds

E A CLAIRE, Wis. – State tree nursery programs and market for quality native tree seeds that will help to improve Wisconsin’s forests continue to thrive for generation to come.

U.S. Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources reforestation program, sources quality native tree seeds for reforestation projects across the state and markets native tree species trees to researchers and landowners around the state.

“Most of the purchases are from local collectors,” Murphy said. “Remember to obtain permits for the trees prior to picking. When collection goals have been reached purchasing will end.”

The nursery’s Reconstitution Program for this year is looking to buy seed from bald cypress, jack pine, basswood, butternut, shagbark hickory, white oak, red oak, swamp white oak, walnut and wild plum.

Regenerating this year, payments for basswood seed will be based on the quality of processed and cleaned seed. Basswood seed will be based on the quantity of processed and cleaned seed. Basswood seed will be bought per acre, not per pound.

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Tackling the Problem of Ghost Nets

By Aaron R. Cooklin IUW Sea Grant
August 28, 2014

Once they break free, they drift undetected, buoyed, submerged and battered by the wild waters and shifting ice sheets of Lake Superior. Yet they continue to entrap fish, waterfowl and marine debris, even though no fishermen will now come to claim and clear them. They’re called ghost nets, and they’re a problem in Lake Superior, where commercial and tribal fisheries depend on gill nets for their livelihood. In the Apostle Islands area alone, there are hundreds of commercial and tribal fish nets, spanning ten of miles. Sometimes, these nets come unmoored, creating hazards for wildlife and for recreational boaters and anglers.

To tackle the problem, Wisconsin Sea Grant has partnered with the Apostle Islands Sport Fishermen’s Association (AISA) and the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) Law Enforcement Team. Using a two-year, $25,000 investment from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrations’ (NOAA) Marine Debris Program, the three groups will spend the next year organizing and holding a series of workshops aimed at educating new commercial and tribal anglers on best net-management practices, as well as creating an educational video to detail the appropriate actions recreational boaters should take when they come unmoored.

“Lake Superior is a very inhospitable environment,” said Al House, a board member of AISA and member of Sea Grant’s advisory board. While House estimates that one percent of all commercial or tribal nets break free and become ghost nets, it still creates an impact that needs to be addressed.

“These nets are depleting a resource that isn’t there anymore,” House said. “Lake Superior fish population, rich in valuable species like trout, cisco and whitefish. “The idea is to move quickly to protect it.”

Currently, tribal fisheries have no requirement to report that their gill and trap nets have become unmoored. In some cases, several days may pass before a fisherman even notices that a net has broken free. Depending on what the ghost net entangles, it might float on the water’s surface, or sink to the bottom, trapping debris and fish.

“The challenge is definitely finding them,” said House. “They’re worse than the proverbial needle in the haystack. The idea is also to find an accurate assessment of the scope of the ghost net problem—nobody knows how many or how few there are.”

Eventually, the partners would like to develop and implement a GIS-based system for identifying, tracking and reporting ghost nets, as well as creating a second video on best-management practices fisheries can use to reduce net loss.

But the first step is education.

“This is really about raising awareness of how to be safe when you’re fishing,” said Titus Selheim, Sea Grant’s fisheries outreach specialist and the project’s principal investigator. “There’s lots of sources of entanglement ruk out there, and you may not know what you’ve become entangled in.”

The recreational boater net safety video will include information for boaters on how to free themselves from netting, whether it is a ghost net or a properly moored one that the boater has blundered into.

The key is not to panic, and to understand that the sooner you can extricate yourself using the proper tools, the safer you will be and the less damage will be done.

House said the key to the project’s eventual success is that it’s designed as a partnership that involves the groups who may benefit from raised awareness and the economy, and it’s certainly not their fault that nets break free. We can cooperate and make the whole situation better.”

But the partners agree, “It’s a win-win for both sides,” said House. “Recreational anglers don’t want to entangle fish as well. For the commercial side, not losing your gear is a good thing.”

Production on the first educational video is expected to start within the next few weeks. Workshops are scheduled to begin early next year.

#TacklingTheProblem

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**August 2014 Calendar Winners**

**1** $1000 Cash  Greg Murise, Johnston City, IL  845

2 Roger Horkey  Kenneth Chadwick, West Allis, WI  4099

3 Gander Mountain Card $100  John Brass, Racine, WI  3984

4 Gander Mountain Card $100  Kevin Riley, DeForest, WI  3721

5 Bench Super Nova 12 ga  Dale Simonson, Sparta, WI  3705

6 $100 Cash  Scott Abendroth, New Berlin, WI  3266

7 Gander Mountain Card $100  Kevin Rottman, Lyons, WI  2546

8 2 Night Stay at Hotel Mead, WI Rapids  Carolyn Smazal, Colby, WI  2547

9 $100 Cash  Al Schulte, Kewaskum, WI  2389

10 Gander Mountain Card $100  Max Church, Fort Atkinson, WI  2301

11 Marlin xt .22 Lr  Dean Gaugert, Juneau, WI  2004

12 Gander Mountain Card $100  Gutt Boys, Bowler, WI  1905

13 Ruger Hawkeye  Kenneth Schmidt, West Allis, WI  1889

14 30-06 Caliber - Wold Rifles  Paul Thormodsgard, Colby, WI  1883

15 $100 Cash  Greg Marlow, Johnston City, IL  1883

16 Gander Mountain Card $100  Sarah’s Hope Jewelry  1883

17 Savage II Hg 270 win  Scott Abendroth, West Allis, WI  1883

18 Gander Mountain Card $100  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

19 Gander Mountain Card $100  Critters Wolf River Sports  1883

20 Remington 10 Kp, 12 ga  Critters Wolf River Sports  1883

21 $100 Cash  Sarah’s Hope Jewelry  1883

22 Gander Mountain Card $100  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

23 Savage II Hg 270 win  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

24 $100 Cash  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

25 Gander Mountain Card $100  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

26 CVA Buckhorn .50 Cal  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

27 $100 Cash  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

28 Gander Mountain Card $100  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

29 Marlin 336 22 Le  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

30 Gander Mountain Card $100  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

31 Gander Mountain Card $100  Door Prizes, Gun Raffles & Much More!  1883

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**American Legion #364 Sportsmen’s Banquet**

Wednesday, September 17th 5:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Critters Wolf River Sports 700 W. Main St-Winneconne Buffet Dinner & Prize Drawing

Door Prizes, Gun Raffles 50/50 Raffles Paddle Raffles Crossbow Raffles, Fishing Packages Special Women’s Raffles Freezer/Meat Raffle & Much More!

Tickets Purchased at Wookey’s Bar and Grill Critter’s Wolf River Sports

**Outdoor Activity Day**

**1st Prize** - Browning A-Bolt 270 or 30-06 Caliber – Wood Rifles with Scope OR $1000 Cash

**2nd Prize** - Sarah’s Hope Jewelry “Elysees” Multi-Function Pendant & Earring Set Donated by Ross’s Jewelry ($225 Retail Value)

**3rd, 4th, 5th Prizes** - $100 Cash, Each

**Proceeds Help Sponsor…**

**Outdoor Activity Day**