



2404 E. Broadway, Alton, IL 62002

VOLUME 43 ISSUE 8

SEPTEMBER 2013

Rosi Franke, Editor

Tel: 618-396-2509

e-mail: rgfranke@frontiernet.net

MWHI Hosts Get-Together



From left to right: Tim Krumweide – IDNR Wildlife Biologist, Ed Zwicker – IDNR Region IV Natural Resources Coordinator, Rosi Franke – MWHI Editor, Joe Webster – Batchtown Sportsmen’s Club, Mark Alessi – IDNR Assistant Division Chief, Randy Smith – IDNR Manager of Wetland Wildlife Program, Kim Postlewait – IDNR MRA Site Superintendent, Sgt. Mark Wagner – Conservation Police, John Popov – MWHI Legislation Chairman, Kent Boyles – IDNR Wildlife Biologist, John Gineris – MWHI President, Dave Geisler – MWHI Board. Not pictured, John Mabery – USFWS Refuge Manager, Shane DeSherlia – MWHI Treasurer, Mike Arnold – MWHI Vice President, Bob Jones- MWHI Area Projects Chairman, Scott Bryant – IFOR President.

On August 15, 2013, MWHI hosted an informal get-together with representatives from IDNR, USFWS, Batchtown Sportsmen’s Club and IFOR at the Grafton Winery in Grafton, IL. Following the luncheon, the group toured the MRA Calhoun Point and Batchtown areas.

Thank you for joining us!

MWHI OFFICERS 2013

President

Banquet Chairman
John Gineris
618-708-8117 (cell)
618-786-2596 (home)

Vice-President

Mike Arnold
618-786-2300

Treasurer

Shane DeSherlia
618-639-0855 (home)
618-946-4520 (cell)
desherlia3@hotmail.com

Membership Secretary

Mike Devening
618-259-6181

Correspondence Secretary

Rosi Franke
618-396-2509
rgfranke@frontiernet.net

Recording Secretary

Cheri Gineris
618-786-2596

MWHI DIRECTORS 2013

Bob Jones
Area Projects Chairman
IFOR Board Representative
618-578-9547 (cell)

Chris Tite
Co-COE Chairman
618-610-3513

Dave Geisler
Nilo Chairman
618-576-9845

Eric Rhuede
Wood Duck Nest Box Chairman
Gun Raffle Chairman
618-410-9853

Justin Wolfe
Carlyle Lake Area Projects Chairman
618-377-0397

Don Taul
618-978-8285

Brian Arnold
Refuge Chairman
COE Chairman
618-535-9979

Bob Schneider
618-960-9906

Scott Bryant
IFOR President
618-535-0151 (cell)

Bo Adcock
618-910-2061

Larry Franklin (Advisor)
John Popov (Advisor)

2

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, September 9, 2013

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 pm

Monday, October 7, 2013

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 pm

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

MWHI GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
at Alton-Wood River Sportsmen Club
in Godfrey, IL at 7:00 pm

Illinois DNR Newsbits for August 2013

New Hunting and Trapping Digest: The Illinois Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations 2013-2014 edition is now available to view online in PDF format through the IDNR website at this link:
www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Documents/HuntTrapDigest.pdf

Visit us at our website:
mwhi.us

The *Sentry* is published monthly except for December and January by Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc., 2404 E. Broadway, Alton, IL, 62002. The *Sentry* deadline is always the second Monday of each month.

Statements and opinions expressed in the *Sentry* are those of the individual and do not necessarily represent the views of Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc. Officers, Directors, Advisors, Members or the Editor. The appearance of an ad in this newsletter does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of a product or service. We encourage our members to take note of those businesses advertising in our newsletter and shop with them when they are in the market for their product or services.

Teal Season Fever

Duane Hahnenkamp

After a long flood summer, it finally feels like the duck blind building season is here. It finally stopped flooding after the Fourth of July and I got the mud out of the blind two weeks later. After another week, we had the roof repairs done and one good load of brush on the blind. Luckily the flood did little damage and most of the brush stayed on. So, as of the first week of August, we are in pretty good shape as far as the blind is concerned. We have already got a load of cane and a truck load of oak lined up, so now we are starting to look forward to teal season.

By the time you read this I hope to be seeing teal in our areas. Three weeks ago I heard the first hint of a 6 bird teal limit for this fall. I heard that the teal had a great hatch and now would be the time to take advantage of our good fortune. I guess the feds finally realized what you and I have known for years. You got to take advantage of the teal when you can, and plus that Louisiana kills more teal than almost all the other states in the flyway put together. Also, because of the river floods, there will not be much feed in any of our river bottoms. If you hit them hard one day, more than likely they will be gone the next day.

This year I expect most of the teal to migrate through our area pretty fast and you better be there on that cold snap day when the flight comes through. The new 6 bird limit will help out a lot this year for sure. Another thing (rumor?) I heard was that southern Illinois hunters might be allowed to have a teal season that runs a week later than ours. Apparently the southern boys believe that most of the teal don't arrive down there till later. I hate to tell those boys that Louisiana had a great teal season last year and their season was the same as ours. On a flight day, the same teal that dive bomb us in the morning will be flying through their Southern Illinois hunting areas a few hours later. Fact is that a flock of teal that we shoot in the morning on a flight day was probably in Canada or the Dakotas the day before. Then, after we shoot at them a couple times, they will keep going and be in Arkansas or Louisiana by the next day. Fact is that a migrating flock of teal or any waterfowl can make the whole migration in a couple of days if they want to. With no feed on the river to hold any teal this year, I expect flight days to be the best chance for our teal hunting. Another fact according to the biologists is that the male teal start migrating through about the second or third week of August and that the females migrate with the young birds 3 or 4 weeks later. Depending if the teal hatch was early or late will dictate when our best hunting will be.

This year will make it 40 years since my first Teal season in 1973. I know there are a lot of Grafton or Calhoun boys who have hunted teal longer. But to say 40 years of anything is starting to make me feel old. I actually started rabbit and squirrel hunting 8 years before that, plus goose hunted down south for a couple years before I started duck hunting. But my first Teal season in 1973 was the real wake up call for me to the world of duck hunting. As they say, I was "hooked on Quack" and never looked back. Every duck season, except for a few, started with Teal season, which to me was like Christmas Day in September. I saw some good teal years in the 70's and some bad teal seasons in the 80's, when I was lucky to even see a teal on some days. I guess it was those 4 or 5 years and when they closed Teal season in 1988 that was the low point. Of course, the duck hunting for me wasn't that much better in those years either. I'm sure glad that the ducks came back in the 90's because the only thing that seemed worth the effort was goose hunting, which was just starting to explode.

For all the young guns out there who started duck hunting after 1992, I hope you realize how good you have had it. It's going to take dedicated duck hunters to keep the sport of waterfowl hunting going in the future, with the loss of all the CRP ground. I guess I have joined the ranks of old men duck hunting and just hope for these teal hunting days to keep my memories going.

Good luck this Teal season and bust them on the flight days.

Pere Marquette State Park Rendezvous

Visitors are invited to step back in time to the days when frontier fur trappers met with fur traders and buyers in a reenactment festival at Pere Marquette State Park in Grafton, IL on Sept. 7-8.

The first-ever Pere Marquette State Park Rendezvous will be a traditional Pre-1840 Rendezvous, with buckskinned re-enactors portraying primitive traders and campers. There will be period demonstrations, black powder and longbow shoots, camp music, and food harkening back to the Illinois frontier.

The Pere Marquette State Park Rendezvous features free admission, with hours 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. on Sat., Sept. 7 and 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Sun., Sept. 8. For more information, call 217-524-5861.

IDNR Announces 2013-14 Waterfowl Season Dates

IDNR News Release 8/15/2013

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources today announced **proposed waterfowl season dates** and bag limits for the 2013-14 seasons. The recommendations include 60-day duck seasons in each of the state's four waterfowl hunting zones, along with Canada goose hunting seasons of 90 days in the North and Central zones, a 84-day Canada goose season in the South Central Zone, and a 65-day Canada goose season in the South Zone.

The Illinois seasons are based on a five-year plan for waterfowl hunting season dates that was developed in 2011 and continues through the 2015 season. For 2013-14, Illinois will open the regular duck, Canada goose, and snow goose seasons on Oct. 19 in the North Zone, Oct. 26 in the Central Zone, Nov. 9 in the South Central Zone, and Nov. 28 in the South Zone. White-fronted goose seasons open Nov. 4 in the North Zone, Nov. 19 in the Central and South Central zones, and Nov. 28 in the South Zone.

The proposed daily duck bag limit is six (6) and may include no more than four (4) mallards (two hens), three (3) wood ducks, one (1) mottled duck, two (2) redheads, three (3) scaup, two (2) pintails, two (2) canvasbacks, and one (1) black duck. The proposed daily bag limit of mergansers is five (5), only two of which may be hooded mergansers. The possession limit for ducks and mergansers is three times the daily bag limit by species and sex.

For Canada geese and white-fronted geese, the daily bag limit will be two (2) with a possession limit of six (6). For snow geese, the proposed daily bag limit is 20 birds, with no possession limit.

The state's regulations are subject to final approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service later this summer. The IDNR 2013-14 season dates are outlined below.

North Zone	Youth Hunt	Duck	Canada Goose
2013-14	Oct. 12-13	Oct. 19 – Dec.	17 Oct. 19 – Jan. 16
Central Zone			
2013-14	Oct. 19-20	Oct. 26 – Dec. 24	Oct. 26 – Nov. 17 and Nov. 26 – Jan. 31
South Central Zone			
2013-14	Nov. 2-3	Nov. 9 – Jan. 7	Nov. 9 – Jan. 31
South Zone			
2013-14	Nov. 16-17	Nov. 28 – Jan. 26	Nov. 28 – Jan. 31

Illinois 2013-14 Snow Goose and White-Fronted Goose Season Dates

North Zone - Snow Geese - Regular Season: Oct. 19 - Jan. 16
White-fronted Geese: Nov. 4 – Jan. 16

Central Zone - Snow Geese - Regular Season: Oct. 26 - Jan. 31
White-fronted Geese: Nov. 19 – Jan. 31

South Central Zone - Snow Geese - Regular Season: Nov. 9- Jan. 31
White-fronted Geese: Nov. 19 - Jan. 31

South Zone - Snow Geese - Regular Season: Nov. 28 – Jan. 31
White-fronted Geese: Nov. 28 – Jan. 31

The Illinois waterfowl zone maps are available on the IDNR website at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/waterfowl/Pages/MapsApprovedWaterfowlZoneLines.aspx>

The September 2013 early Canada goose season is Sept. 1-15 with a daily limit of five (5) and a possession limit of 15 geese in the North and Central zones, and a daily limit of two (2) and a possession limit of six (6) geese in the South Central and South zones. Illinois' 16-day 2013 statewide teal hunting season is Sept. 7-22 with a daily limit of six (6) and a possession limit of eighteen (18). Shooting hours for the September teal season are different from the regular season, starting at sunrise (½ hour later than regular season) until sunset.

Additional details on the duck, goose, and other migratory bird hunting seasons will be available on the IDNR website at www.dnr.illinois.gov and in the 2013 Illinois Digest of Waterfowl Hunting Regulations, available in September.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS



Extremist Group Publishes Manual to Sabotage Wolf Hunting and Trapping

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance Posted on August 15, 2013

An extremist animal rights and environmental group known as Earth First! published a how-to manual for illegally sabotaging wolf hunts and traps this week. This was in response to a recently introduced federal bill to allow wolf hunting in most of the U.S.

The Earth First! Wolf Hunt Sabotage Manual gives detailed instructions on how to sabotage traps and free trapped wolves. The 12-page manual also refers to trappers as “slob hunters” and “amateurs, a##holes, and part-timers whose techniques are crude.”

The manual, written by a group referring to themselves as the Redneck Wolf Lovin' Brigade, tells activists how to find addresses of trappers so as to follow them from their homes to their trap lines. The manual provides advice on how to secretly follow trappers and leave no trace of footprints nor fingerprints. It also instructs individuals to trip traps to render them ineffective. It also states that “any type of trap line interference is illegal, so you might as well do a thorough job and totally dispose of any traps you find, as this is no more illegal than simply tripping them and leaving them intact.”

The Redneck Wolf Brigade is correct when they state that any type of trap line interference is illegal, as is hunter harassment in all 50 states. Over 25 years ago, USSA wrote the hunter-harassment language that was used by the majority of states when they passed laws protecting hunters, anglers and trappers from being able to enjoy their sports.

Wolf hunting is currently legal in Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota. USSA has helped lead the fight to gain the delisting of the Western Great Lakes Wolf from protected status by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and has seen much opposition from animal rights groups such as Earth First!

Take a moment to look over USSA's tips on how to deal with anti-hunters and harassment. If you find your traps being tampered with or suspect any type of hunter harassment, please contact your local state wildlife agency or authorities immediately!

NRA Update on Gun Bills **1-800-392-8683**

Federal Senate Office **1-202-224-3121**

Federal House Offices **1-202-225-3121**

Illinois State Rifle Association **1-815-635-3198** www.isra.org

Illinois Senate Information **1-217-782-4517**

Illinois House Information **1-217-782-8223**

Sen. Wm. Sam McCann – 50th District
Tel: 217-782-8206 Email: SenatorSam@frontier.com

Sen. Kyle McCarter – 54th District
Tel: 217-782-5755 E-mail: senatormccarter@gmail.com

Sen. Chapin Rose – 51st District
Tel: 217-558-1006

Sen. William R. Haine – 56th District
Tel: 618-465-4764 E-mail: haine@senatedem.state.il.us

Sen. James F. Clayborne – 57th District
Tel: 618-875-1212 E-mail: clayborne@senatedem.il.us

Sen. David Luechtefeld – 58th District
Tel: 618-243-9014 E-mail: sendavel@midwest.com

Sen. Gary Forby - 59th District
Tel: 217-782-5509

Rep. Dan Beiser – 111th District
Tel: 217-782-5996 E-Mail: dvbeiser@sbcglobal.net

Rep. Natalie A. Manley – 98th District
Tel: 217-782-3316

Rep. Adam Brown – 102nd District
Tel: 217-782-8398

Rep. John D. Cavaletto – 107th District
Tel: 618-548-9080

Rep. Dwight Kay – 112 District
Tel: 618-307-9200

Rep. Jay Hoffman – 113th District
Tel: 217-782-0104

Rep. C. D. Davidsmeyer – 100th District
Tel: 217-243-6221

Rep. Mike Bost – 115th District
Tel: 618-457-5787 mikebost@midwestmail.com

Rep. Dan Reitz – 116th District
Tel: 618-443-5757 E-mail: [dreitz@egyptian.net](mailto:dreizt@egyptian.net)

.....
Rep. Rodney Davis - 13th District
Tel: 202-224-3121

Rep. John Shimkus - 15th District
Tel: 618-344-3065 E-mail: house.gov/shimkus

Sen. Richard J. Durbin
Tel: 202-224-2152 E-mail: dick@durbin.senate.gov

Sen. Mark Kirk
Tel: 202-224-2854 Email: kirk.senate.gov
.....

Teal limit likely to increase

By Javier Serna, Contributing Writer, Illinois Outdoor News, Posted on July 25, 2013



Havana, Ill. — Illinois will likely bump its daily limit on teal season for the first time since the season was established in 1965.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently gave states the option to increase daily bag limits because the blue-winged teal population is in good shape, and also OK'd states to increase their possession limits from two times the daily limit to three times.

That was before the annual "Trends in Duck Breeding Populations" report was released in the middle of July, which showed blue-winged teal estimated at 16 percent lower than the 2012 estimate. But the species is still 60 percent above the long-term average.

"[The Service] determined that the population can withstand greater harvest," said Illinois waterfowl

biologist Randy Smith.

The changes still need to clear a few hurdles, Smith said, including the approval of DNR Director Marc Miller and final approval by the USFWS, after a public comment period.

But the change, which would increase the daily bag limit from four birds to six, appears likely at this point, Smith said.

On the continent, blue-winged teal are the second most abundant waterfowl species behind mallard ducks.

In the Illinois River valley, which is surveyed by the Illinois Natural History Survey, there were record numbers of blue-winged teal last fall, Smith added.

The data is used to determine when to have the teal season, which is done ahead of the duck seasons since blue-winged teal arrive first. Usually, by the time the rest of the waterfowl seasons roll around, there are few blue-winged teal still around, which is why the season was established in the first place.

Last year, the Illinois teal season ran from Sept. 8-23. This year's dates have yet to be set. Last year's dates were released in the middle of August. Shooting hours during the September teal season differ from the regular season — they are from sunrise to sunset.

"We might cheat it a little bit to help the southern guys in the state," Smith said of the timing of the season. "They are a species, that when conditions are right, they breed rapidly. They do migrate early. Not every hunter participates. We shoot relatively few of them. There is no reason not to have a little bit higher limit on them."

As for increasing the possession limits, Smith said it won't hurt duck populations, but should encourage out-of-state hunters to hunt in Illinois.

"It can be an inconvenience when you run into that possession limit," Smith said. "This allows a little bit more wiggle room. A lot of guys eat their ducks at the end of the trip. For resident hunters, this probably won't change things a whole lot."

The possession limits were initially put in place to poaching, preventing hunters from taking more than their daily limit. But a more lenient possession limit has been talked about at the federal level for a while now, Smith said.

"There's really not a good reason to not let hunters keep a few more birds in their freezer," Smith said.

Smith said he's heard from several hunters, wondering why an extra wood duck isn't allowed in the bag during the teal season, since hunters in Kentucky, Tennessee and Florida are allowed this luxury.

"The teal season was designed to take advantage of blue-winged teal when they are typically here and not any other species," Smith noted.

Smith said it's because those states have only a five-day season, and Illinois' teal season can range from nine days to 16 days.

And even if Illinois pursued shortening the teal season in exchange for adding a wood duck to the bag, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service no longer appears to favor the practice, Smith said.

"I don't think they would let us do it," Smith said

###

ATV Usage Sticker Requirement

Submitted by Craig Leece, 8/15/2013

[This law went into effect July 1. It was part of SB 1566, the DNR Sustainability Bill. Below is an article that appeared earlier this year, after it was signed into law.]

SPRINGFIELD — People wanting to operate an all-terrain vehicle or dirt bike in Illinois this summer will have to pay the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to do so. Starting July 1, the IDNR will require people operating off-highway vehicles, such as ATVs and dirt bikes, to purchase an annual \$15 public access sticker.

The public access stickers can be purchased over the counter at “DNR Direct” point-of-sale vendor locations that include Wal-Mart stores, bait shops and sporting goods stores.

“Anywhere you can get a hunting license or a fishing license, you can get these stickers,” IDNR Spokesman Chris McCloud. “There’s thousands of them (point-of-sale vendors) throughout the state.”

Anyone caught operating an off-highway vehicle without a public access sticker after July 1 will be charged a \$120 fee.

“It’s a petty offense,” said McCloud.

The \$15 off-highway vehicle fee is one of over 30 IDNR fees that have either been created or increased, as part of Senate Bill 1566. Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed SB 1566 into law last month. It went into effect Jan. 1.

Instead of paying a three-year, \$6 registration fee, people operating non-powered watercrafts, such as float tubes, canoes and kayaks, must purchase an annual \$6 “water usage stamp.”

SB 1566 also increases boat registration fees. The registration fee for boats less than 16 feet long has increased from \$15 to \$18; boats at least 16 feet but less than 26 feet, from \$45 to \$50; boats at least 26 feet but less than 40 feet, from \$75 to \$150; and boats 40 feet or longer, from \$100 to \$200.

In addition to recreational activities, SB 1566 creates and increases regulatory fees for water permits, consulting work and licensing coal mining officials.

A \$2 surcharge has been added to the Illinois license plate renewal sticker fee, as a result of SB 1566. The \$2 surcharge will generate between \$20 million and \$22 million in revenue for state parks that are operated by the IDNR. It prevents the IDNR from imposing state park entry fees, said McCloud.

“The first original idea that was floated in a similar house bill for the state parks was to charge some kind of an entrance fee,” said McCloud. “You would be able to buy some kind of a day pass or a yearly pass to a park. There are some serious drawbacks to doing it that way. It was not something that was supported by the Governor either. And for us, we felt after doing some research that charging a very nominal \$2 increase on your license plate would allow everyone who is a registered vehicle owner in the State of Illinois — your license plate will now be your sticker into any state park. We have over 300 state parks, natural areas, wildlife areas, fish and wildlife areas.”

SB 1566 was created as a sustainability package for the IDNR that has lost over half of its general revenue funding from the state in the last 10 years.

“Our agency has been cut over the last decade by more than 55 percent in general revenue,” said McCloud. “Our staffing has decreased by over 58 percent over that same decade, and because of the ongoing issues with pensions in the state, which are very costly, the Medicaid issue, which was a big drain financially on the state, that general revenue fund, which is the general fund shared by multiple agencies every year — that pot of money is shrinking.

“In 2002 the agency was funded through the general revenue fund to the tune of about \$106 million in that particular fiscal year, and if you fast forward 10 years since, now here in 2012, our general revenue is now at \$48 million. The agency had to find a way to sustain itself, meaning not rely on general revenue to fund and run the agency, and so, Senate Bill 1566 was created.”

[Greg Leece: Found out stickers won’t be available until October]

Water Usage Stamp Update

Kim Postlewait, IDNR – MRA Site Superintendent, 7/2013

Director Miller has made the decision to remove inner tubes from the definition of a “non-powered watercraft”. Officers **SHALL NOT** in any way enforce the Water Usage Stamp provisions on inner tube type devices until such time the proper changes can be made to exclude inner tubes.

Persons are still required to purchase Water Usage Stamps for the other types of non-powered watercraft, such as canoes, kayaks, non-powered jon boats, inflatable boats, kite boards, and paddleboards not propelled by sail, canvas, or machinery of any sort.

A corrected General Order regarding Water Usage Stamps concerning inner tubes will posted as soon as we know how the change will be made. Below is the message posted on today’s DNR Facebook page at Director Miller’s request:

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reviewed the inclusion of innertubes in the Water Usage Stamp, and has decided to submit rule changes to the legislature to eliminate that requirement of the program.

The funds generated from boat registrations and the less-restrictive water stamp for non-motorized craft goes towards public safety, better law enforcement, and to provide safe, legal and adequate access to rivers and streams for the paddling/floating community. The Department has sought to expand recreational opportunities in the past, including new access points and parking, and hoped to re-start this effort with healthy funding and sustainable revenues.

While the rule changes are being submitted through the legislative process, DNR Office of Law Enforcement will instruct its conservation officers of the pending change and direct our professionals not to enforce the existing rules.

###

ISRA Thursday Bulletin 8/1/2013 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

The last few days have been quite busy on the Judicial Circuit. As many of you know Attorney General Lisa Madigan asked the Federal District Court to declare the Shepard v Madigan case moot. The court granted that motion on Friday. The ISRA asked the Same court to grant relief to Illinois FOID card holders and allow them to Carry Concealed until the Illinois State Police start issuing CCW permits. The court denied that request and we appealed. We will update you as more unfolds.

Last week, I spent a paragraph or two talking about the value of training. Some people misunderstood what I was trying to say. I apologize for not being clearer. Many want to take just enough training to get their Concealed Carry Permit. The point I was trying to make is that you can never get enough firearm training. Whether that firearm training applies to your CCW permit is a consideration but not the most important thing. What is important is obtaining and maintaining the highest skill level possible. I believe that after most people get their CCW they will want further training. Whether they do that through taking more classes or work at it on their own is their option. I will say that training under a skilled instructor who can recognize and correct bad habits before they become ingrained is your best option.

I am pleased to announce that as of 5:00PM Wednesday the ISRA membership stood at 30,080. We need to keep growing because this fight is not over-it has just begun.

Thanks for being a member.

Richard Pearson

ISRA Executive Director

Effects of Flooding at Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge

USFWS Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge, Cortney Solum, Visitor Services Manager, 8/5/2013

Brussels, Ill. - In 2012 the region experienced a drastic drought, which despite intuition helped wildlife conservation organizations like Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) that provide habitat for resident animals and migratory birds. The flooding of 2013 has been quite a different scenario.

This time last year Swan Lake, a backwater area of the Illinois River managed by Two Rivers NWR, was lush green with an abundance of food for the expected fall migration of birds. This year however, because river water levels were so high refuge staff was unable to draw down water in Swan Lake until late July.

A draw down mimics natural water fluctuations and produces quality habitat and food for waterfowl and other wildlife. Without the draw down native plants will have a shorter growing season and a harder time making seed before frost comes.

“Despite the unfortunate effects floods have on human lives, they are a naturally occurring state of rivers and wetlands,” said Biologist Ken Dalrymple. “At the refuge we hope for conditions that provide the best habitat for wildlife but also try to remember that floods are important to the ecosystem of a wetland. Floods are a necessary element in the natural cycle. Periodic flooding stimulates increased aquatic production of macro invertebrates and in a large reproductive year a class of fish species that use floodplain habitat for foraging or spawning.”

This year the refuge was unable to perform many of the standard wetland habitat management practices due to summer flooding. Instead the focus was upland. In prairies the refuge Youth Conservation Corps removed invasive species such as Musk thistle and Autumn olive and conducted pollinator bee monitoring and small mammal surveys. They also assisted in monitoring water quality in Swan Lake, construction of a concrete fuel containment pad and washed and maintained equipment.

And now, when waters recede the focus turns to repairing roads and other structures and removing flood debris. Signs need to be inventoried and cleaned, boat docks repaired, down trees removed from roads and gravel replaced where it has washed away.

The refuge is open to public use except the Gilead boat landing north of Batchtown, Ill. is closed due to damage to the road and limited resources to fix it at this time. Also, the Gilbert Lake levee is open to walking but has not yet been cleared of flood debris.

The fall migration is a big question of local waterfowl enthusiasts. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists expect waterfowl numbers to remain strong along the Mississippi Flyway this fall. Waterfowl at Two Rivers NWR might not be as abundant as last year. However, the large amount of vegetative production on the refuge in 2012 will still provide seeds and invertebrates for water birds using the refuge as a stopover on their migration south.



(Left) Swan Lake 2012: Successful 2012 growing season helps produce food and habitat for migrating birds and resident wildlife.

(Right) Two Rivers-2013-Flooding: In late spring 2013 flood waters were high enough to cover Illinois River Road at a time when the refuge usually prepares for a summer water level draw down.

Does Joe Biden's Shotgun Tip Hold Any Truth?

A Washington state man recently arrested for the illegal discharge of a firearm tried to tell police that he'd been adhering to the Vice President's rather questionable self-defense advice.

By Jeff Johnston (RSS) American Hunter Insider July 22, 2013

The Problem

Recently a Washington man used Vice President Joe Biden's advice of, "If you want to protect yourself, get a double-barreled shotgun ... and fire two blasts outside the house"—as his basis of defense when he was arrested for illegal discharging of a firearm. The local police department isn't buying the man's excuse, and the Veep did not rush to his aid.

Of course, NRA-trained, sensible gun owners don't have to take Army Special Forces master door breacher Ronny Sweger's opinion that Biden's advice is ridiculous and downright dangerous. But out of respect to the man who was elected Vice President of the best country in the history of the world, I'll look to the positive side of his statements on self-defense. Surely we can find some common ground, even in an era when anti-gunners think suspending an 8-year-old for biting breakfast pastries into the abstract shape of a gun is sensible. But I digress.

The Partial Biden Fact

If you want to protect yourself, get a double-barreled shotgun.

The Myth

A double-barrel shotgun is the best tool for home defense.

Credit Where Credit is Due:

Thanks, Joe. Fact is, nearly any shotgun—or any gun in general—can be used effectively for self-defense, depending on the scenario. Where Biden is misguided is his choice of shotgun. Why would any Second Amendment-abiding American specifically choose a shotgun meant for bird hunting when there are scores of others on the free market that hold 5, 8, or even 15 shells? I mean, even a dunce knows that if one shot is good, two is better, and that's a good reason to buy an AR-15. But if a double barrel is all you have or can afford, it's certainly better than a Louisville slugger, or vomiting on would-be rapists as Illinois state police recommend. But when true self-defense experts give advice on the ideal shotgun for protecting one's self and family, grandpappy's old double is seldom their first choice. Or second. Or third.

Take the UTS-15, for example. It's a bullpup-configured compact shotgun that holds 7 rounds in each magazine tube, plus one round in the chamber for a grand total of 15 shells. It feeds from each tube—either alternately, or from the tube of the shooter's choosing. Therefore it's possible to load 7 rounds of buckshot in one tube, and 7 slugs in the other, so you can shoot either when the self-defense scenario dictates. As a bonus, it can also be used for sporting purposes. I know this because I shot a nice gobbler with it this past spring. It handled beautifully, and, while I only needed one shot, I could have fired 14 more times if I missed or the turkey tried to get away. On the skeet field, I only had to reload once. Boom, times 25!

Of course there are other high-capacity shotguns available, like the dual magazine Kel-Tec KSG, the semi auto Remington VersaMax, which holds 8 shells, or the venerable Benelli M2 that's stopped more bad guys than Batman.

The Conclusion

Biden had it partially right when he said shotguns are good for self-defense. Some are just better than

others. But don't follow all of Biden's advice, or you may wind up in the slammer without any shotgun and with no Biden to bail you out. ###

Diamond Island

Email from Kim B Postlewait, Site Superintendent, IDNR – MRA, 7/30/2013

Someone evidently did not like our idea for managing Diamond Island and opened the gate and drained it. It must have occurred either the 24th or 25th, by the time I found out we had already lost too much water to achieve our plan for this year. We let the area continue to drain in hopes we can grow some duck feed. The feed probably will not be mature enough to flood for teal season and if your a blind builder you should prepare to build and brush your blind in the mud. If anyone knows who opened the gate, I would be more than happy to pass that information on to Law Enforcement.

Bertoglio Drywall

Shawn Bertoglio **HANGING**
616-779-0424 **TAPE and FINISHING**
618-498-5268 **TEXTURING**
 PAINTING

MWHI 2013

**Donated 5 Wood Duck Nest Boxes to the
Batchtown Sportsmen's Club**

Awarded two \$500.00 Scholarships

**Donated \$450.00 to the Wounded Warrior
Project**

**Donated 1 Wood Duck Nest Box to the
Ducks Unlimited Kansas City, MO Chapter**

2013-14 MWHI Gun Raffle

One Winner Every Month

**Ticket will be drawn on first of every month,
beginning at the October MWHI General
Membership Meeting**

\$40 per ticket Only 500 sold

October -	Super X 3
November--	Savage 20ga Bolt Action w/Nikon scope
December--	T/C Endeavor camo
January--	T/C Venture 22-250
February -	Browning A5
March -	Glock 22 40 cal
April -	Rem 870 Supermag Turkey Gun
May -	Rem 1911 45 cal
June -	Ruger Mini 14 Ranch
July -	Beretta 92 9mm
August -	CMMG AR15 .223
September -	Rem Versa-Max 12 ga

**For tickets or more information, please contact
Eric Rhuede at 618-410-9853**

Illinois DNR Newsbits for August 2013

Fur Harvest Survey: The 2012-13 Illinois Fur Harvest Survey, which estimates numbers and values of pelts sold by hunters and trappers, shows the total number of pelts sold was 200,913, an increase of 11% from 2011-12. The value of pelts sold by fur-takers increased 62% to \$2.5 million. Favorable global markets lifted pelt prices to levels not seen since the late 1970s and early 1980s. Sales of Illinois trapping licenses increased from 4,996 in 2011-12 to 6,384 in 2012-13; this was the largest number of licenses sold since 1988-89. The first modern season for trapping river otter in Illinois occurred in 2012-13, with a harvest of 2,002 pelts (approximately 13% of the statewide population). Trappers targeting river otters also captured beavers, which contributed to a 67% increase in harvest of this species. Sales of coyote pelts increased 124%, spurred by an average value of \$17.60 per pelt. The full Fur Harvest Survey report is available on the IDNR website at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Documents/FURSUMM1213.pdf>

