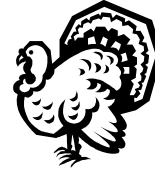


From the Plymouth Service Center
The Woodchucks



To
Sheboygan County Conservation Association
September 21, 2011

From the Front Line: Cheryl

From Fish Management: Travis

- **Sheboygan Marsh:** Fisheries conducted 2 electrofishing surveys of the South Ditch at the marsh over the last month.

Date	northern pike	largemouth bass	bluegill	black crappie	pumpkin seed	bullhead	common carp	
01-Sep		2	1	4	3	2	15	25
20-Sep		0	8	12	1	0	9	9

While catch rates were not high numerous young of the year bluegill were noted but not caught. Holding the water level higher in the South Ditch took minimal effort from WDNR staff and provided the benefit of a place of public access for fishing throughout the drawdown. There were frequent observations of anglers taking advantage of this opportunity as well as school groups using the ditch for canoe trips.

- **Restocking Plan:** Quotas were submitted to the WDNR propagation system for large fingerling northern pike and depending on production those should be available next year. At this time there is no plan for restocking of panfish species as the state hatchery system does not raise them. Being a river system and since the South Ditch was held higher, fish will repopulate the marsh naturally. In general, fish populations rebound well after drawdowns due to increase water quality and availability of a more diverse aquatic community.
- **Visit the Fisheries Webpage for hot topics and upcoming events:** <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/>

From LE: Joe, Mark, and Mike

- **Fishing curfew on LK Michigan tributary streams: September 15 – December 31.** Fishing by any method is prohibited during this time period from ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise, in all local tributary streams. In Sheboygan CO this includes Barr CR, Black River, Sheboygan River, Weeden CR, Pigeon River, & Seven Mile CR. Sunset/sunrise information is available through local media (TV, newspaper, etc). A person can also use the tables available in boating & hunting pamphlets. Good field guide are vehicle headlights & dawn to dusk street/yard lights – When these lights are on, it's time to wrap up the gear for the day.
- **Blaze orange required during the Youth Gun Deer Hunt: October 08-09.** The Youth Gun Deer Hunt is statewide. All hunters are required to wear blaze orange clothing during a designated Gun Deer season, which includes this Youth Hunt. The only exception to the blaze orange requirement is Waterfowl hunting.

- **2009 Gun Deer Season criminal cases.** 2 Sheboygan CO criminal cases finally settled, after almost 2 years. Father & Son were charged for a shining & shooting incident on the northeast corner of the Sheboygan Marsh. 10PT Buck was killed. Several Neighbors observed the incident. Witnesses obtained License Plate number of the Suspect vehicle. Deputy intercepted the Suspect vehicle, seized a shotgun, & identified the occupants. Wardens completed the investigation & requested criminal prosecution. Both men eventually plead into the misdemeanor shining charges. Court ordered mandatory ~\$2100.00 fine & 3 year DNR Revocation.
- **2010 Gun Deer Season criminal cases.** 2 Sheboygan CO criminal cases settled, earlier this year. 2 guys were intercepted on the Sheboygan Marsh South Ditch, well after shooting hours. An untagged Antlerless Deer was located partially concealed in the vehicle. Warden requested criminal prosecution. Both men convicted on misdemeanor Untagged Deer charges. 1 guy plead into the charge, & companion was found Guilty at a Jury Trial. Court ordered mandatory ~\$2100.00 fine & 3 year DNR Revocation.

From Wildlife: Dale, Missy, Dan, Ed, Kelly, and Dustin

- **Voluntary Public Access (VPA) update** - Staff are hired and in-place and have been actively contacting landowners to get land enrolled into the new Voluntary Public Access (VPA) program. Much like the leased Public Hunting Ground (PHG) program, this VPA program leases land from private landowners for public access for up to 3-years. As of this week, we've enrolled 2,438-acres in Sheboygan County with another 111-acres in the works. Most of those acres are former PHG properties located around Adell Wildlife Area. We're in the process of sending-out an extensive mailing in an attempt to obtain more acres to lease around other State Wildlife Areas and the Kettle Moraine State Forest. Property boundaries are currently being posted and maps of the properties will soon be available on the DNR website under "VPA". Contact DNR Wildlife Biologist Missy Sparrow at 920-892-8756 Ext. 3041 for more information.
- The **refilling of Sheboygan Marsh** to conclude the summer drawdown was begun on September 15th. Water levels will continue to rise, but will probably not recover to the full level for several weeks. After the 2002 drawdown, it took 8-inches of rain and 47-days to refill the marsh. The lower levels will probably hinder water access to certain areas of the marsh for the first few weeks of the archery deer hunting season and the waterfowl hunting seasons. Anglers will continue to experience diminished fishing opportunities for the next couple of years, and canoeists will have less water to float until next spring. Alternate areas for hunters, anglers, and canoeists include Kiel Marsh, Theresa Marsh, and Mullet Creek Wildlife Areas. The response of the marsh to the drawdown appears to be excellent. A mixture of 5-foot tall "pioneering" wetland plants, such as, smartweeds, bidens, and sedges covers the exposed mudflats. More "later-growing" emergent plants, like rushes, bur-reeds, and bulrushes have also started to grow throughout the marsh. Bottom sediments have been compacted and floating cattail mats have had a chance to re-root and anchor. These conditions will provide increased habitat diversity for use by a wider variety of wildlife species when water returns to the marsh. These plants will provide abundant food to migrating waterfowl, as well as, a food base for reproducing aquatic insects that will help to boost fish populations within a few years. Officials have held some fish in a section of the marsh throughout the drawdown and plan to stock northern pike in the marsh next year. Projects completed during the drawdown include: inspection of the dam, netting and retention of fish, construction of a deck and new rails at the boat launch, installation of a new water level gauge, control of woody vegetation, and aerial photo documentation of the drawdown. Contact DNR Wildlife Biologist Dan Weidert at 920-892-8756 Ext. 3040 for more information.
- The alternate **duck-banding** site that we developed as a result of the Sheboygan Marsh drawdown finally paid-off on the morning of September 7th. We caught (282) mallards, (25) wood ducks, and (1) black duck in one shot of the rocket net. An estimated (300+) ducks also flew away when the net was shot-off. We had a quota of (200) mallards and (200) wood ducks to

band this year. Duck band returns are used to: 1) calculate harvest and survival rates of sex and age groups (cohorts), 2) determine the methods that ducks are harvested, and 3) illustrate distribution and movements of ducks.

- Here's an update to the work that DNR Wildlife Biologist Dustin Miller is doing on the **Sheboygan River Area of Concern (AOC)**. Only a couple more samples are needed to reach the quota of small mammals (i.e., White-footed Mice, Meadow Voles, and Shrews) that Dustin is trapping for contaminant sampling. The next step is to process and send tissue samples to the State Lab of Hygiene for analysis. Trapping of mink for contaminant sampling will be done from October 29th through December 9th in the AOC section of Sheboygan River, as well as, a control area upstream. This Wildlife Management work is part of a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funded project aimed at developing a plan to delist the Sheboygan River Area of Concern. In the early 1990s, A DNR Wildlife Intern had trapped small mammals in the floodplains along the Sheboygan River AOC and found that they were contaminated with PCBs. Dustin's work is a follow-up project to compare with those previous samples and to set a baseline for comparison after the floodplain contamination is cleaned-up. Contact Dustin at 920-892-8756 Ext. 3042 for more information.