

Proposed Resolution #7
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Abraham Downer, MUCC Conservation Policy Board
Travis Powers, MUCC Executive Board
MUCC region: 3 & 8
Proposed: March 12, 2022 Conservation Policy Board meeting
Title: Resolution to recommend that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division, always have a dedicated, full-time Upland Game Bird Specialist on staff.

1. **WHEREAS:** currently, there is no dedicated, full-time Upland Game Bird Specialist employed by the Michigan
2. Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division, has had a full- time Upland
4. Game Bird Specialist(s) employed since 1944; and,
5. **WHEREAS:** prior to the previous Upland Game Bird Specialist, The State of Michigan, Wildlife Division, had
6. employed several biologists, with each biologist having expertise in a specific Upland Game Bird Species. These
7. positions were all combined into one position when the previous Upland Game Bird Specialist was hired; and,
8. **WHEREAS:** the State of Michigan, Wildlife Division, has stated that it may choose to distribute the
9. responsibilities of the current Upland Game Bird Specialist’s position among existing biologists within the
10. agency, creating more work for them without increasing the number of staff, potentially leading to a decreased
11. quality of conservation management for upland game bird species; and,
12. **WHEREAS:** the State of Michigan hosts several upland game species, including: ruffed grouse, American
13. woodcock, the Eastern wild turkey, pheasant, sharp-tailed grouse, and bobwhite quail; and,
14. **WHEREAS:** Michigan is a premier hunting destination for these species; and,
15. **WHEREAS:** the State of Michigan depends on an \$8.9 billion hunting industry (as according to MUCCs 2017
16. Economic Impact Study) that brings tourism dollars into local, small-town communities where grouse and
17. woodcock are pursued; and,

18. **WHEREAS:** in 2015 an estimated 83,175 hunters pursued ruffed grouse, 29,647 hunters pursued
19. American woodcock, and 23,209 hunters pursued pheasant; and,
20. **WHEREAS:** the State of Michigan leads all other states in American woodcock harvest, active American
21. woodcock hunters, and days spent afield pursuing American woodcock; and,
22. **WHEREAS:** pheasants are an important resource for Southern Michigan residents; and,
23. **WHEREAS:** after Eastern turkey reintroduction efforts began in Michigan in 1954, their population has grown
24. from under 1,000 birds to an estimated 200,000+ as a direct result of the work done by the Department's Upland
25. Game Bird Specialist; and,
26. **WHEREAS:** the Upland Game Bird Specialist is responsible for managing and growing Michigan's Grouse
27. Enhanced Management Sites (GEMS) program, which drives tourism revenue in local communities; and,
28. **WHEREAS:** Michigan is continually in the top three states of ruffed grouse harvest annually; and,
29. **WHEREAS:** Upland game species are considered a bellwether for other game species; and,
30. **WHEREAS:** upland game bird species are facing population declines and habitat loss; and,
31. **WHEREAS:** there are many non-profit organizations operating in the State of Michigan with direct interest in
32. maintaining stable and sustainable populations of upland game species; NOW,
33. **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** that Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) support and advocate
34. that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division, continue to have a dedicated, full-time
35. Upland Game Bird Specialist employed by the agency.