



**2023 MUCC Resolutions with
Comments and Background
Information**

Prepared by MUCC Staff

Proposed Resolution #1
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Steve Dey, Straits Area Sportsmen’s Club
Passed: September 17, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Wolf – Dog Conflict Reporting

1. **WHEREAS:** it is vitally important for all dog owners to promptly report a Wolf-Dog conflict to
2. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) biologists; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** prompt reporting is important to the all dog owners it is also important to the
4. DNR biologist to respond quickly to gather important data for their reporting and records;
5. and,
6. **WHEREAS:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) supports recommendations of the
7. 2022 Wolf Management Advisory Council which included recommendations about prompt
8. reporting of wolf –dog conflicts; and,
9. **WHEREAS:** the DNR now has a smartphone app where the public can now easily report their
10. deer harvest and wildlife viewing; and,
11. **WHEREAS:** According to the DNR deer harvest reporting took only a few minutes on average;
12. and,
13. **WHEREAS:** A system to report wolf-dog conflicts need not be anymore cumbersome on the
14. user; NOW,
15. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** because of the importance of reporting wolf-dog
16. conflicts MUCC will work with the DNR to add a ‘Wolf-Dog Conflict’ tab to the wildlife
17. viewing section, and,
18. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** MUCC will work with the DNR to include a “wolf-dog conflict”
19. reporting tool in the DNR smartphone app, which would enable all dog owners who had a
20. wolf-dog conflict to voluntarily report it.
21. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that MUCC will work with the DNR to also include an option to
22. report “wolf-livestock conflict” on the smartphone app.

Proposed Resolution #1
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Steve Dey, Straits Area Sportsmen's Club
Passed: September 17, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Wolf – Dog Conflict Reporting

Background/Problem:

UP Residents feel the existing reporting tool for wolf-dog or wolf-livestock to be too difficult, and the department response too slow considering the success of the new DNR mobile application and deer harvest reporting. The WMAC recommendation said:

“To recommend the Department establish a dedicated 24-hour phone number for reporting human/wolf encounters/activity in addition to existing methods.”

Currently, people wishing to make a report can use the RAP line, where the report will be recorded for DNR staff to review.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC will work with the DNR to add a 'Wolf-Dog Conflict' tab to the wildlife viewing section.
- MUCC will work with the DNR to include a “wolf-dog conflict” reporting tool in the DNR smartphone app, which would enable all dog owners who had a wolf-dog conflict to voluntarily report it.
- That MUCC will work with the DNR to also include an option to report “wolf-livestock conflict” on the smartphone app.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC has numerous policies relating to wolf management in the UP. No policy currently exists regarding any wolf conflict reporting measures.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- This would allow quick and convenient responses by the public in the event of a wolf/dog or wolf/livestock conflict.
- The app has proven to be effective and successful during its rollout, further utility could increase its usage even further.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- DNR staff will still have to review each report and respond as necessary. This will be a significant burden on staff resources.
- The RAP line already exists and serves a similar purpose.

DNR Response:

The mobile application being used for deer harvest reporting is currently under development for other Department priorities including enhancements based on feedback from the 2022 deer harvest reporting year. Funding for 2023 has already been determined.

The Department currently responds to conflicts between dogs and wolves and also between livestock and wolves. These conflicts are typically reported via the Report All Poaching (RAP) line which is available 24/7 with trained operators who gather all the important information and get it to available local law enforcement or wildlife staff. Because some of these situations require an immediate response, these operators can ensure that the information is received by a staff member who is available and on-call.

The Department has a robust program in partnership with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for reporting wolf conflicts. Online reporting of these types of situations would delay response times that could have negative consequences on farmers, dog owners, or members of the public, and result in us not fulfilling our duties outlined in our agreement with the other agencies. Currently, the application being used for deer harvest reporting does not have a mechanism to immediately alert Department personnel that a submission needs a response. This capability would require development. The application being used for deer harvest reporting also does not have the ability to know which staff are available on any given day or who is closest if a response is needed immediately. The proposed resolution only adds another step in the process as the Department still needs to contact the person reporting the conflict, potentially adding a delay to our response.

In addition, for non-emergency situations where wolves are perceived as causing issues, members of the public are encouraged to call their local biologist and the biologist will fill out a Wolf Activity Report on their behalf. This could include a wolf close to houses, a wolf following hunting dogs (but no contact made), etc. This is the exact same process as is used for bears, where local wildlife staff fill out Bear Activity Reports. This ensures local staff get the report and can provide information, conduct a site visit, etc., as needed.

Citizens who would like to report seeing a wolf or have a conflict which did not result in a depredation or human safety issue can currently use a smartphone to access our Eyes in the Field reporting system from the DNR website or call their local DNR office. We believe the current reporting system meets the needs of the Department and citizens of Michigan and does not require a change.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #2
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Greg Peter, Immediate Past President
Passed: September 17, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Wake Boat Regulations

1. **WHEREAS:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) policy resolution entitled – Establish
2. Regulations on the Operation of Wake Boats passed at convention in 2013; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** this resolution stated specifications concerning the size of the lake (2,000 acres)
4. and recommended distance from shore (1000 feet) without substantiating scientific analysis;
5. and,
6. **WHEREAS:** one of the fastest growing segment of the boating industry is the sale of wake
7. boats (wakeboard boats outsell ski boats 4 to 1); and,
8. **WHEREAS:** the attendant wave formation has been shown to be a hazard to other water sport
9. participants as well as damaging to the shoreline and lake bottom habitats especially with
10. repeated passes along the same course; and,
11. **WHEREAS:** other Midwestern states with a large number of inland lakes (Minnesota.
12. Wisconsin, Michigan) have seen an increase in the use of and the conflicts caused by these
13. boats as well as waters in Oregon, Maine, and Vermont; and,
14. **WHEREAS:** Wisconsin has passed a hazardous wake law (Statue 30.68) stating under the
15. heading "Creating hazardous wake or wash -(a) No person shall operate a motorboat so as to
16. approach or pass another boat in such a manner as to create a hazardous wake or wash. (b) An
17. operator of a motorboat is liable for any damage caused to the person or property of another by
18. the wake or wash from such motorboat...and no person may operate a motorboat within 100
19. feet of any dock, raft, pier, or buoyed restricted area on any lake at a speed in excess of
20. slow-no-wake. Furthermore no person may operate a personal watercraft at a speed in excess
21. of slow-no-wake within 200 feet of the shoreline of any lake and(b) No person may operate a
22. personal watercraft at a speed in excess of slow-no-wake within 100 feet of any other boat; and,
23. **WHEREAS:** these boats cannot easily be cleaned of invasive aquatic plants (a requirement by
24. law in Michigan); and,
25. **WHEREAS:** the creation of these waves is not compatible to other boating activities (paddle
26. board kayak, sailboat) and the reverse is not true; and,
27. **WHEREAS:** modern wakeboard boats can quickly pump 1,000 pounds of water into ballast
28. tanks and make the boats wake three times normal size and these are not normal waves for
29. inland lakes and are devastating to spawning and nesting beds as well as shorelines; and,

30. **WHEREAS:** current studies at the St. Anthony Falls laboratory of the University of Minnesota
31. reveal the typical wake does not dissipate to form and energy of a normal ski boat until
32. greater than 500 feet and current studies show the disturbance of bottom sediments in less than
33. 20 feet of water and resuspension of bottom sediments promotes harmful algae blooms as well
34. as disturbing fish habitat (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2iEI-duivl>); and,
35. **WHEREAS:** This is not intended to be a ban but a regulation that minimizes the impact on the
36. environment and other uses of our waterways; and,
37. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC advocate for the elimination of these craft from
38. vulnerable waters and limit their use to depths of greater than 20 feet and further from
39. shorelines, docks, and other riparian uses to greater than 500 feet.

Proposed Resolution #2
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Greg Peter, Immediate Past President
Passed: September 17, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Wake Boat Regulations

Background/Problem:

MUCC has general policy supporting regulations on wake boats, or other large wake-producing vessels. However, a new study has emerged highlighting the ecological damage caused by these boats. This resolution would bring MUCC policy in line with this new scientific literature.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC advocates for the elimination of these craft from vulnerable waters and limit their use to depths of greater than 20 feet and further from shorelines, docks, and other riparian uses to greater than 500 feet.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC's general wake boat policy is to restrict the proximity of wake boats to the shoreline and to urge the DNR to restrict watercraft speeds in certain areas where boats congregate. (2018)
- Work with legislature, or take whatever action is necessary, ensuring that boat owners have equal access and right of use to the public waters of this state. (1996)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- These boats are causing damage to small lakes, shallow lakes, and shorelines.
- New scientific literature exists enforcing the ecological damage these vessels can cause.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- People should be free to use the vessel of their choice on their public waters.

DNR Response:

The DNR believes greater education and outreach on responsible wake boat operations would be very beneficial. The Department is already working with the Michigan Boating Association to bolster education and outreach on this subject and developing best practices signs and documents in cooperation with them.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #3
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Patrick Hogan, Life Member & Zach Snyder, Individual Member
Passed: September 17, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Establish Turkey Harvest Reporting

1. **WHEREAS:** Current methods utilized to determine our turkey flock size and harvest quotas, are
2. largely based on estimates, historical quotas, and voluntary contributions from hunters; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** To do our best in managing the turkey flock we need to gather accurate
4. information; and,
5. **WHEREAS:** Michigan ranks seventh in the nation for the number of wild turkeys killed by
6. hunters, according to the National Wild Turkey Federation. The top turkey hunting states, in
7. order, are Missouri, Alabama, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, New York and Mississippi,
8. (<https://www.minwtf.org/wild-turkeys-carve-out-place-in-michigan>);and,
9. **WHEREAS:** in Missouri all turkey must be Telechecked online, using the MO Hunting app, or by
10. telephone; and,
11. **WHEREAS:** in Alabama Game Check became mandatory in fall 2016 (it was voluntary the prior
12. year). This portion of the regulation requires all hunters to report their harvested deer or turkey
13. within 48 hours and record the confirmation number on the Harvest Record (either in paper
14. form, on the Outdoor AL app, or via telephone at 1-800-888-7690; and,
15. **WHEREAS:** Pennsylvania requires that within 10 days of harvest (five days for mentored
16. hunters), turkey hunters must report harvests to the Game Commission, either by going online
17. to the Game Commission's website, www.pgc.pa.gov, calling toll-free, or by sending in a
18. postage-paid report card received with this digest; and,
19. **WHEREAS:** in Wisconsin registration is mandatory for all deer, bear, turkey, sharp-tailed
20. grouse, bobcat, fisher and otter and is accomplished using gamereg.wi.gov; and,
21. **WHEREAS:** in New York for both fall and spring turkey, you must report via the new DECALS
22. reporting system within 7 days; and,
23. **WHEREAS:** all hunters in Mississippi have to report their harvest before 10 p.m. on the day of
24. harvest; and,
25. **WHEREAS:** Michigan's Turkey quotas were mentioned by the current Wildlife Chief as being
26. arbitrary at the August 11, 2022 Natural Resources Commission meeting; and,
27. **WHEREAS:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) was the driving force behind the
28. successful voter passage of Proposal G: a referendum on Public Act 377 of 1996, which
29. amended the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) to grant the

30. Natural Resources Commission (NRC) exclusive authority to regulate the taking of game in this
31. state. The amendment also requires the NRC, to the greatest extent practicable, to use
32. principles of sound scientific management in making decisions regarding the taking of game;
33. and,

34. **WHEREAS:** more accurate data would aid in furthering sound scientific management to allow
35. for improved wild turkey population health, and increased hunting opportunities; and,

36. **WHEREAS:** infrastructure for reporting the harvest of whitetail deer in Michigan currently exists
37. allowing for a low cost transition for other species; NOW,

38. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That MUCC work with the DNR and the Natural Resource
39. Commission to enact a turkey harvest reporting system, in conjunction with the new DNR
40. app-based reporting system.

Proposed Resolution #3
Requires $\frac{2}{3}$ Majority

Submitted by: Patrick Hogan, Life Member & Zach Snyder, Individual Member
Passed: September 17, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Establish Turkey Harvest Reporting

Background/Problem:

During the 2021 deer season, the DNR instituted a voluntary deer harvest reporting program, which was then mandated during the 2022 season. In conjunction with that mandate, the DNR released its mobile application which has all the same functionality of the DNR website while also allowing users to use the app to display the non-kill tag licenses instead of carrying the physical license.

Over 300,000 deer of an average ~400,000 annual harvest were reported, giving a preliminary compliance rate of about 75%. The department is encouraged with this result in the first year, and the app proved to be an effective method of compliance with little burden on the user.

In an effort to increase the data collected on turkey harvest, this resolution would support creating a harvest reporting system similar to the one used for deer hunters.

This resolution was amended by the Conservation Policy Board to remove “mandatory” from the title and body of the policy.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC work with the DNR and the Natural Resource Commission to enact a turkey harvest reporting system, in conjunction with the new DNR app-based reporting system.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC has numerous policies relating to seasonal turkey hunting. No policy currently exists regarding turkey harvest reporting.
- MUCC does have a policy supporting the decriminalization of mandatory deer harvest reporting, as well as other changes to how reporting data is captured. (Interim Board Resolution 2022)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- This system would provide DNR biologists useful data we are not currently collecting regarding turkey harvest numbers and insight into population abundance.
- Similar to deer harvest reporting this would allow much quicker collection and analysis of data.
- Allowing biologists to monitor turkey harvest in real-time.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Hunters have concerns with mandatory reporting to the DNR.
- DNR timelines are unreasonable for hunters utilizing remote hunting areas.

DNR Response:

The Department supports evaluating and seeking ways to enhance and improve data collected on turkey harvest and turkey populations. Currently, the Department is reviewing the first completed season of deer harvest reporting using a mobile application. As we continue to develop enhancements to the application, we are also evaluating it for additional game species reporting and assessing needs for research projects.

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #4
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Mike Thorman, Michigan Hunting Dog Federation
Passed: September 17, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Apprentice License for Special Needs Individuals

1. **WHEREAS:** The apprentice hunting license requires an apprentice hunter to be within arms
2. reach of a licensed parent or guardian, or a 21 year old licensed hunter approved by the parent
3. or guardian; and,
4. **WHEREAS:** The apprentice license is no cheaper than traditional hunting licenses; and,
5. **WHEREAS:** Currently an apprentice hunter can only hunt on an apprentice license for two
6. years before they are required to take hunters safety to continue hunting; and,
7. **WHEREAS:** The purpose of hunters safety is to prepare an individual to hunt safely alone; and,
8. **WHEREAS:** There are anecdotal reports of large numbers of hunters safety instructors leaving
9. the program statewide; and,
10. **WHEREAS:** This has led to prospective students having a hard time finding a class they are
11. able to take, particularly in rural areas; and,
12. **WHEREAS:** The number of hunters nationwide is decreasing rapidly; and,
13. **WHEREAS:** We have a responsibility as conservationists to ensure the next generation
14. continues to have hunting opportunities; and,
15. **WHEREAS:** Special needs individuals exist that can perform the physical requirements of
16. hunting with assistance but lack the capacity to pass a written hunters safety test; and,
17. **WHEREAS:** These hunters will always require assistance when in the field; and,
18. **WHEREAS:** Currently there exists no mechanism for such an individual to continue hunting past
19. the two years on an apprentice license; NOW,
20. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That Michigan United Conservation Clubs advocates for the
21. removal of the two year apprentice license limit for special needs individuals who cannot pass a
22. hunters safety test, as signed off on by an appropriate medical professional, allowing these
23. hunters to hunt legally under an apprentice license indefinitely.

Proposed Resolution #4
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Mike Thorman, Michigan Hunting Dog Federation
Passed: September 17, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Apprentice License for Special Needs Individuals

Background/Problem:

This resolution idea came from a member of the MHDF who approached MUCC staff about a policy change idea. This individual's special needs child can perform the physical demands of harvesting an animal but is unable to properly comprehend and pass a written hunter's safety test. This person will always be hunting with a mentor, but due to the current apprentice license system, they cannot purchase an apprentice license for more than two years. This resolution would propose changing the apprentice license structure to allow special needs individuals, with proper medical documentation, to hunt under an apprentice license indefinitely.

As an apprentice hunter currently, you must:

- Be 10 years of age or older.
- Be accompanied by someone 21 years of age or older who possesses a regular current-year hunting license for the same game you will be hunting.
- Have the accompanying hunter be your parent, guardian, or someone designated by your parent or guardian if you are 10-16 years of age.

As an accompanying hunter, you must:

- Be able to come to the immediate aid of the apprentice and stay within a distance that permits uninterrupted, unaided visual and verbal contact.
- Accompany no more than two apprentice hunters while hunting.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs advocates for the removal of the two-year apprentice license limit for special needs individuals who cannot pass a hunters safety test, as signed off on by an appropriate medical professional, allowing these hunters to hunt legally under an apprentice license indefinitely.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC work with DNR, the NRC, and other partner organizations to change our current law to eliminate the minimum age requirement for hunting and develop a mentor-type program (with direct and constant supervision) to give our youth every possible opportunity to become hunters, trappers and fishermen. (2010)
- MUCC supports the continued enjoyment by individuals with disabilities. MUCC will try to educate and help to restore the ability for individuals with disabilities to continue to enjoy outdoor recreation. (1989)
- No policies directly relating to licensing of special needs individuals.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Would allow more special needs individuals to hunt without barriers.
- These individuals will never hunt without a mentor so hunters' safety is not necessary for them.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Many hunters safety instructors would argue they would work with the parent and the student one on one to get the student certified.

DNR Response:

A change to the Apprentice License requirements or the Mentored Youth Hunting License requirements must be done through an amendment of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994. The Department recommends that changes for individuals with special needs would be more appropriate as part of the Mentored Youth Hunting Program. It is the mentor's responsibility to always maintain no more than arm's length distance from a mentored youth, not the apprentice license holder. The Department supports expanding the Mentored Youth Hunting License to include:

- Children with a developmental disability or intellectual disability who are unable to obtain certification of completion of training in hunter safety
- Adults who have a legal guardian and are unable to obtain certification of completion of training in hunter safety

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #5
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Bruce Hall, Cass County Conservation Club
Passed: December 3, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Easier Access to Michigan Recreational Passports

1. **WHEREAS:** a Recreational Passport is required at State Parks, Boat Launches and other
2. locations in Michigan, and;
3. **WHEREAS:** these Recreational Passports are available only when you purchase your license
4. plates, or log online and wait days, and sometimes weeks, to receive your Recreational
5. Passport in the mail, or at specified State Parks, and;
6. **WHEREAS:** the Recreational Passport is also required for out-of-state visitors, and;
7. **WHEREAS:** this limited availability can be a deterrent to the use of the facilities requiring a
8. Recreational Passport, NOW;
9. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** the Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
10. Michigan Legislature and the appropriate state agencies to create a more efficient system to
11. make the Recreational Passport immediately available.

Proposed Resolution #5
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Bruce Hall, Cass County Conservation Club
Passed: December 3, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Easier Access to Michigan Recreational Passports

Background/Problem:

Limited availability of a recreational passport can prevent people from visiting many of the state managed properties and attractions that require one for entry. A simpler, more immediately available purchase method could remove that barrier to entry.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the Michigan Legislature and the appropriate state agencies to create a more efficient system to make the Recreational Passport immediately available.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC has current policies that relate to recreational passports but none that relate directly to the accessibility of these passports.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Removing barriers of entry to Michigan's state parks would allow more folks to visit.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- The existing system is already sufficient and not overly burdensome.

DNR Response:

Currently, most parks do not separate out boating access site sales from typical parks sales, so it's difficult to know exactly how many were sold at the remote locations. Torch River (159) and Torch River Bridge (139) sold a few, but other places like Port Sanilac (17) sold very few.

Some of the options we have for people who did not get a Recreation Passport through the Secretary of State or if they have a non-MI registration is:

- Use the envelopes at the location for each Boating Access Site and a sticker will be mailed to the recipient. They can use the tag to show they are in compliance at the time of the purchase
- Go to a nearby state park or customer service center. (not a great option for Cass County)
- Non-resident Recreation Passport only: Purchase it online through midnrreservations.com. CAMIS is our fulfillment center and they can start purchasing them as early as January for an annual pass.

The Department is currently working on the following additional opportunities:

- Establishing kiosks at certain remote locations for people to purchase a Recreation Passport. The kiosk gives them a voucher and they must redeem it.
- Allowing residents to purchase Recreation Passport online through midnrrreservations.com. We currently are selling non-resident Recreation Passes and are seeking to expand it to include resident Recreation Passport sales as well.
- Exploring the option to also sell Recreational Passport on the RSS (licenses).

Currently, it is not feasible to use a non-sticker purchase. The Department does not have access to Michigan Department of State data and even if we did, it would not make a difference in out of state sales.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #6
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Erik Schnelle, State Advisory Council President, NDA
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Game Tracking Dog Use

1. **WHEREAS:** The use of game tracking dogs is becoming increasingly popular to aid in the
2. recovery of wounded deer, elk and bear; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** the use of trained game tracking dogs and their skilled handlers is of immeasurable
4. benefit to ethical hunters seeking to do all they can to recover wounded or lost deer, elk and
5. bear; and,
6. **WHEREAS:** Fees for the services for the use of tracking dogs can range from free to hundreds
7. of dollars; and,
8. **WHEREAS:** unregulated, unethical and uncontrolled use of tracking dogs could lead to increase
9. trespassing, unethical behavior and poaching; and,
10. **WHEREAS:** Unscrupulous dog handlers with poorly trained dogs could cheat Michigan hunters
11. out of large sums; and,
12. **WHEREAS:** Uncontrolled tracking dogs and their handlers entering properties without
13. permission and in uncontrolled manner can have a negative impact on hunting opportunities on
14. those neighboring properties for up to a week and lead to dangerous conflicts with property
15. owners; and,
16. **WHEREAS:** Dispatch of wounded animals by trackers can end suffering more quickly if the
17. hunter is disabled and incapable of accompanying the tracker, but also has the potential to
18. create situations where unethical requirements or illegal hunting take place; and,
19. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) shall
20. support changes and amendments to tracking dog regulations to encourage the increased use
21. of trained game tracking dogs and skilled dog handlers whose dogs are under control at all
22. times and will not enter properties without permission; and,
23. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the MUCC shall support for tracking dogs and their
24. handlers to be: registered with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), possess a valid
25. Concealed pistol license, have passed a United Blood Trackers level 1 or greater test, and be
26. required to call/text DNR law enforcement to inform them when they begin tracking a deer and
27. report results within 12 hours; and,

28. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the MUCC shall support regulations that require that the
29. tracking dog be on a lead of up to 50 feet OR wearing an e-collar with GPS with recall capability
30. (this could include use tone, vibration, and/or shock) and property line mapping (ie: Garmin 200i
31. Alpha) to stop it from entering properties where the handler has not obtained permission to
32. enter; and,

33. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** If the dog is off lead, the dog and handler should successfully
34. complete the new United Blood Trackers off lead test that was established in 2022; and,

35. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That If the handler loses control of the tracking dog and it enters
36. an adjoining property without permission, the handler should be required to inform DNR law
37. enforcement with detailed track information, and make a good faith effort to inform the
38. landowner that they are entering the property to retrieve their dog. If the handler takes these
39. steps and enters the property alone, without a firearm or bow of the season, to retrieve their
40. dog, they will not be subject to penalties; and,

41. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the MUCC shall support DNR registered tracker dispatch in
42. situations where the hunter is disabled as described in MUCC's 2019 resolution AC02B0619
43. and thus unable to accompany the tracker. When the hunter is physically capable of
44. accompanying the tracker the MUCC shall support requirements that the hunter promptly
45. dispatch the wounded animal if needed.

Proposed Resolution #6
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Erik Schnelle, State Advisory Council President, NDA
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Game Tracking Dog Use

Background/Problem:

With a rising popularity in using dog trackers to recover wounded deer, there is a need to ensure that hunters are not being deceived by unethical dogs/trackers who are not trained or may violate other laws while tracking wounded game. By enacting new regulations, only certified dogs and trackers who meet certain criteria would be able to lawfully track wounded big game.

It is assumed that any differences between this resolution (if approved) and past policies, this resolution would supersede previous policies.

Staff believe the intent of the resolution is to amend Wildlife Conservation Order section 2.1a Tracking by Dogs, which would not change what the licensed hunter is allowed to do.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) shall support changes and amendments to tracking dog regulations to encourage the increased use of trained game tracking dogs and skilled dog handlers whose dogs are under control at all times and will not enter properties without permission.
- MUCC shall support for tracking dogs and their handlers to be: registered with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), possess a valid Concealed pistol license, have passed a United Blood Trackers level 1 or greater test, and be required to call/text DNR law enforcement to inform them when they begin tracking a deer and report results within 12 hours.
- MUCC shall support regulations that require that the tracking dog be on a lead of up to 50 feet OR wearing an e-collar with GPS with recall capability (this could include use tone, vibration, and/or shock) and property line mapping (ie: Garmin 200i Alpha) to stop it from entering properties where the handler has not obtained permission to enter.
- If the dog is off lead, the dog and handler should successfully complete the new United Blood Trackers off lead test that was established in 2022.
- If the handler loses control of the tracking dog and it enters an adjoining property without permission, the handler should be required to inform DNR law enforcement with detailed track information, and make a good faith effort to inform the landowner that they are entering the property to retrieve their dog. If the handler takes these steps and enters the property alone, without a firearm or bow of the season, to retrieve their dog, they will not be subject to penalties.
- MUCC shall support DNR registered tracker dispatch in situations where the hunter is disabled as described in MUCC's 2019 resolution AC02B0619 and thus unable to accompany the tracker. When the hunter is physically capable of accompanying the tracker the MUCC shall support requirements that the hunter promptly dispatch the wounded animal if needed.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC will support an initiative to amend the Michigan Wildlife Conservation order to provide added definition to permit registered trackers to operate one dog at a time off lead, for the goal of recovering legally hunted big game animals. MUCC will support and work with Michigan legislature to amend any laws contradictory to the suggested changes regarding allowing a registered tracker to operate one dog off lead for the purpose of recovering legally hunted big game animals. (2019)
- MUCC will support an initiative to amend the Michigan Wildlife order to provide or remove language to allow registered trackers to dispatch a wounded, legally hunted big game animal for the goal of recovering or ending the suffering of already wounded, legally hunted big game animals in two specific cases: (1) the licensed hunter is unable to walk through a dense wooded area due to a temporary or permanent disability or medical condition (2) the life or safety of the tracking dog is in jeopardy. MUCC will support and work with the Michigan legislature to amend any laws contradictory to the suggested changes regarding allowing registered trackers to dispatch wounded big game animals under the 2 specific cases listed above and to provide exceptions for the goal of recovering or ending the suffering of already wounded, legally hunted big game animal. (2019)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Ensuring dogs and handlers are UBT certified ensures legitimacy and protects both the tracker and hunter.
- Private property rights should be respected, but this also creates achievable and reasonable actions for trackers to follow.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- This proposal sets too many restrictions on dog owners.
- An individual to use his own dog would have to get UBT certified and inform DNR of a track on their own private property.
- Many of the proposed restrictions would put too large of financial strain on the dog owners.

DNR Response:

The Department is currently considering allowing trackers to track off leash while demonstrating control of the dog. However, the Department does not recommend a change to the blood tracker requirements allowing a tracker to dispatch a game animal as several sections in the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994 would require legislative changes. Currently, only a licensed hunter is legally allowed to harvest game.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #7
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Bob Schulz, President, Metro West Steelheaders
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Pontoon Registration Fee/Renewal Fee

1. **WHEREAS:** Michigan Compiled Law (MCL) 324.80124 requires that watercraft vessels in the
2. State of Michigan be registered, and that registration will be renewed every three (3) years; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** MCL 324.80124 sets forth the fees to be paid for that registration, and registration
4. renewal fees for motorized watercraft vessels based solely on length; and,
5. **WHEREAS:** MCL 324.80124 sets a separate registration and renewal fee for all pontoon
6. watercraft vessels, regardless of vessel length; and,
7. **WHEREAS:** Pontoons can operate at the same capacities of other motorized watercraft
8. vessels; and,
9. **WHEREAS:** Pontoons are now being used for all water activities (tubing, water skiing, fishing)
10. including on the Great Lakes; and,
11. **WHEREAS:** Pontoon registration/renewal fee is \$23.00 regardless of length; and,
12. **WHEREAS:** Other motorized watercraft vessels fee is based solely on length and ranges from
13. \$14.00 to \$448.00; and,
14. **WHEREAS:** This is an unfair fee schedule to all other motorized watercraft vessels that have
15. the same capacities equal access to State of Michigan waters; and,
16. **WHEREAS:** It should be known that all other motorized watercraft vessels, such as ski boats,
17. bass boats, cabin cruisers, sail boats, etc., pay the same fee; and,
18. **WHEREAS:** It should be known that all registration/renewal fees for motorized watercraft
19. vessels are based solely on length and not vessel dollar worth; NOW,
20. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs shall seek to have MCL
21. 324.80124 be amended so that all motorized watercraft vessels pay the same
22. registration/renewal fees based on length.

Proposed Resolution #7
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Bob Schulz, President, Metro West Steelheaders
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Pontoon Registration Fee/Renewal Fee

Background/Problem:

Pontoon boats are among the most common boats on the lakes nowadays, and they can perform as a ski-boat, fishing boat, lounge, etc. However under current law the registration fee for ANY pontoon boat is a flat \$23. Other motorized watercraft vessels fee is based solely on length and ranges from \$14.00 to \$448.00, for example any other boat that is 16-23 feet pays a \$42 registration fee. This would bring pontoon boat renewals and registrations up to what other vessels pay.

This resolution would supersede current MUCC policy to exempt small boats from user fees.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs shall seek to have MCL 324.80124 be amended so that all motorized watercraft vessels pay the same registration/renewal fees based on length.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC seeks to have the user fee eliminated or amended to exempt boats 26 feet and under not used for charter. (1991)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Would create an even playing field for all non-charter boats.
- Raise more money for DNR Waterways fund.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Pontoon boats have been paying the same fee for years.

DNR Response:

The Department believes the registration fees for motorized watercraft based solely on length should include pontoons. Pontoons can operate at the same or similar capacities as other motorized watercraft of the same size and are being used for all watersport activities (tubing, water skiing, fishing, high-speed boating, trolling, etc.) on all waters of this state, including on the Great Lakes. This would provide for consistency and simplicity when tracking and reporting registrations of motorized watercraft by length as required by the United States Coast Guard.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #8
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Mike Thorman, Michigan Hunting Dog Federation
Passed: December 3, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Extension of Apprentice Hunting License Timeline

1. **WHEREAS:** The apprentice hunting license requires an apprentice hunter to be within arms
2. reach of a licensed parent or guardian, or a 21 year old licensed hunter approved by the parent
3. or guardian; and,
4. **WHEREAS:** The apprentice license is no cheaper than traditional hunting licenses; and,
5. **WHEREAS:** Currently an apprentice hunter can only hunt on an apprentice license for two
6. years before they are required to take hunters safety to continue hunting; and,
7. **WHEREAS:** The purpose of hunters safety is to prepare an individual to hunt safely alone; and,
8. **WHEREAS:** There are anecdotal reports of large numbers of hunters safety instructors leaving
9. the program statewide; and,
10. **WHEREAS:** This has led to prospective students having a hard time finding a class they are
11. able to take, particularly in rural areas; and,
12. **WHEREAS:** The number of hunters nationwide is decreasing rapidly; and,
13. **WHEREAS:** We have a responsibility as conservationists to ensure the next generation
14. continues to have hunting opportunities; and,
15. **WHEREAS:** Some individuals may choose to hunt alone for a longer period of time, preferring
16. instead to hunt with significant others, friends, or other family members; NOW,
17. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That Michigan United Conservation Clubs advocates for
18. allowing Michigan's hunters to hunt legally under an apprentice license for three years if they
19. take at least the online hunter safety education program in the first two years to provide a
20. provisional certificate until the hunter safety in-person field portion can be completed.

Proposed Resolution #8
Requires $\frac{2}{3}$ Majority

Submitted by: Mike Thorman, Michigan Hunting Dog Federation
Passed: December 3, 2022 Policy Board Meeting
Title: Extension of Apprentice Hunting License Timeline

Background/Problem:

With declining hunter numbers nationwide the need to recruit and retain new hunters is more important than ever. It is also becoming increasingly difficult to find hunter safety classes around the state. Some individuals have no desire to hunt without a mentor and coupled with the difficulty of finding a hunter's safety class, feel that these facts that hunters' safety should not be a requirement to hunt with a mentor after two years.

As an apprentice hunter currently, you must:

- Be 10 years of age or older.
- Be accompanied by someone 21 years of age or older who possesses a regular current-year hunting license for the same game you will be hunting.
- Have the accompanying hunter be your parent, guardian, or someone designated by your parent or guardian if you are 10-16 years of age.

As an accompanying hunter, you must:

- Be able to come to the immediate aid of the apprentice and stay within a distance that permits uninterrupted, unaided visual and verbal contact.
- Accompany no more than two apprentice hunters while hunting.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs advocates for allowing Michigan's hunters to hunt legally under an apprentice license for three years if they take at least the online hunter safety education program in the first two years to provide a provisional certificate until the hunter safety in-person field portion can be completed.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC work with MDRE, the NRC, and other partner organizations to change our current law to eliminate the minimum age requirement for hunting and develop a mentor-type program (with direct and constant supervision) to give our youth every possible opportunity to become hunters, trappers and fishermen. (2010)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Removing barriers for hunters could result in the retention of more hunters long-term.
- The apprentice hunter must stay within the direct control of the mentor hunter.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Online hunters safety exists, requiring only a field day portion in person.
- Hunter safety is an important tool in creating safe and responsible hunters.

DNR Response:

An apprentice hunter does not have to be “within arm’s reach” of the licensed hunter, they only need to be “accompanied”. MCL 324.43502 defines “accompany” as to go along with another individual under circumstances that allow one to come to the immediate aid of the other individual and while staying within a distance from the other individual that permits uninterrupted, unaided visual and auditory communication. Although any injury or death is a tragedy, Michigan has an incredible low hunter casualty incident number. Reviewing the data shows that since hunter education has been mandated by law, hunting incidents, including deaths, have continued to decrease significantly. Over the last six years we have had less than 10 incidents each year and only nine fatal incidents for that period. In 2022, there were only three reported hunting incidents and no fatalities, making it one of the safest years for hunting in recorded history. This is attributed to the state’s requirement for hunter education and the individuals who donate their time to teach it. Extending the time an individual can hunt without training is increasing the chances of a hunting incident.

Michigan has three delivery methods for hunter education that are offered year around and across the state. The online course vendor provides a voucher upon successful completion of the course, for the student to be able to attend a required in-person field day. The voucher is valid for one year after the completion of the online course.

Class offerings and the number of students trained have reached the pre-COVID five-year average statewide. There were more than 420 class offerings which included over 17,000 available seats. Approximately 15% of those seats were either not filled or the student canceled at the last minute. Several instructors have been removed due to inactivity or failing to meet the requirements of an instructor. We have also trained and certified approximately 100 new hunter education instructors in 2022.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:**Position:**

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #9
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Zach Snyder, Individual Member, Conservation Policy Board Member
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Retention of Bear Points

1. **WHEREAS:** There is no guarantee that leftover bear licenses will be available for any hunt or
2. unit; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** Traditionally, only western upper peninsula units have any leftover bear tags; and,
4. **WHEREAS:** Leftover licenses are currently sold on a first-come, first-served basis for a one
5. week period prior to the season for unsuccessful applicants, and any remaining licenses are
6. open to the general public one week after that; and,
7. **WHEREAS:** The quotas are set for a target harvest goal, and ensuring these tags are used by
8. active hunters would help achieve these biological goals; and,
9. **WHEREAS:** If a hunter wishes to purchase a leftover bear license, that hunter is forced to
10. relinquish any accrued bear preference points; NOW,
11. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that Michigan United Conservation Clubs support and
12. advocate through the Natural Resources Commission and Michigan DNR to allow for the
13. retention of a hunter's accrued preference points when purchasing a leftover bear license.

Proposed Resolution #9
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Zach Snyder, Individual Member, Conservation Policy Board Member
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Retention of Bear Points

Background/Problem:

Currently, per DNR policy a hunter that purchases a leftover bear tag, after unsuccessfully applying, a hunter loses their accrued bear points. At the same time, a hunter who does not apply can also purchase a leftover tag.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs support and advocate through the Natural Resources Commission and Michigan DNR to allow for the retention of a hunter's accrued preference points when purchasing a leftover bear license.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- Favors the adoption of a preference point system for hunts requiring a permit in MI. (1999)
- No policies relating to the retention of points for any species.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Hunters who do not apply can also buy a leftover tag at no detriment to themselves.
- The hunters who apply and are unsuccessful are providing more money for conservation.
- The quotas are set by biologists and this would not provide an undue burden on the resource.
- In most years there is only a single UP Bear Management Unit with leftover tags.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Hunters who apply get a week's head start on buying leftover tags over those who do not apply.
- Could increase harvest, and decrease quotas if more active hunters are able to participate.

DNR Response:

Point system implementation details are a matter of department policy and procedure. For fairness and consistency, the current policy is that points are automatically reset for anyone who obtains a bear license. It does not matter if the license is obtained through drawing selection or purchase as a leftover. The only exception is that lifetime license holders are allowed to retain their points if they buy a leftover license.

For example, almost 500 people were selected for a Bergland 3rd period license in the 2022 bear drawing and their points were reset by the drawing system. The department's view is that it would be unfair to those successful applicants if individuals who get the exact same license as a leftover are allowed to keep their points.

To evaluate a change as suggested in the resolution, the Department would need to evaluate the fairness of a change in procedure, the capabilities of the MiConnect system, and the costs and timeline for implementation.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #10
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Greg Peter, MUCC Past President
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: State Park Endowment Fund (SPEF) Oversight

1. **WHEREAS**, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) has proven to be an effective
2. mechanism for allotting royalty extraction funds through a governing citizens MNRTF board;
3. and,
4. **WHEREAS**, these projects are judged against criteria created to best benefit the public lands
5. and the natural resources from which wealth is extracted, for purposes of acquisition,
6. improvement, and development of recreation on land held in public trust; and,
7. **WHEREAS**, the premise of the royalty payment is compensation for the extraction of resources
8. from public lands by benefiting the expansion and conservation of state holdings, and constitute
9. assets placed in a public trust; and,
10. **WHEREAS** the Michigan State Parks Endowment Fund (SPEF) has no such governance by a
11. citizen board as constituted in the MNRTF; and,
12. **WHEREAS**, the use of public funds above and beyond the \$500 million cap for the MNRTF
13. constitute the funding of the SPEF, and by extension should be used for the same purpose, and
14. **WHEREAS** recent federal funds have been made available to the Department of Natural
15. Resources (DNR) to meet some of the state park deficiencies intended to be addressed by
16. SPEF, and yet the limit to which this fund can rise remains unchanged; NOW,
17. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, Michigan United Conservation Clubs will discuss the
18. establishment of a similar governing body for the SPEF to make decisions as to the
19. disbursement of the fund for acquisition, improvement, and restoration (capital expenditures)
20. and not for operations (recognizing that any such project will have a certain % of labor cost and
21. staff time needed above and beyond the normal operating costs of the Division – a % to be
22. considered by the suggested board as that which is appropriate to the grant proposal).

Proposed Resolution #10
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Greg Peter, MUCC Past President
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: State Park Endowment Fund (SPEF) Oversight

Background/Problem:

Currently the State Park Endowment Fund does not have a citizen board to provide input or oversight to disbursement of the funds. The Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund has a gubernatorial-appointed citizen board and they have the opportunity to provide input and oversight to financial decisions.

Without the opportunity to provide input to a board, citizens may feel their priorities are not being heard and the projects that are being funded are not in the best interest of the citizens or the resource.

As a result of Proposal 1 of 2020, the Michigan Constitution now requires that at least 20% of the money made available for expenditures from the SPEF in any fiscal year, must be spent for capital improvements at Michigan state parks.

The Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee is a body MUCC serves on, but it is advisory only and it can only make non-binding recommendations to the DNR and does not interact independently or share recommendations with the legislature.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs will discuss the establishment of a similar governing body for the SPEF to make decisions as to the disbursement of the fund for acquisition, improvement, and restoration (capital expenditures) and not for operations (recognizing that any such project will have a certain % of labor cost and staff time needed above and beyond the normal operating costs of the Division – a % to be considered by the suggested board as that which is appropriate to the grant proposal).

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC will use the strength of its 40,000 plus hunters, anglers, trappers and conservationists and over 200 affiliated local clubs around the state to support an addition to the MNRTF to include the extraction of renewable resources, or creation of renewable energy. Further, MUCC will work with our state legislature to see that Bonuses for lease rights, rent on acreage, and percentage of gross values of solar and wind energy creation is deposited into the MNRTF, and ultimately the State Parks Endowment Fund (SPEF). MUCC will also work with the legislature to see that these Bonuses for lease rights, rent on acreage, and percentage of gross values will not negatively impact the establishment of renewable energy sources. (2020)
- Work with decision makers and partners to ensure that the royalties from the sale of the state's non-renewable natural resources continue to be used for the benefit of current and future generations by creating a Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat Trust Fund (or other solutions to prevent diversion of royalties to non-conservation uses) that will receive the royalties now deposited into the State Parks Endowment Fund once the State Parks Endowment Fund reaches its cap. (2013)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Creating a board would allow citizens the opportunity to have a direct say in the expenditure process of the State Park Endowment Fund.
- The Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund currently operates under a model that is governed by a citizen board, similar to what is being proposed in this resolution.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- The Michigan Constitution in Article IX section 35a (3) already states, “Money available for expenditure from the endowment fund as provided in this section shall be expended for all of the following: (a) Capital improvements at Michigan State Parks. (b) Operations and maintenance at Michigan State Parks. (c) Acquisition of land or rights in land for Michigan State Parks.
- (d) Administration of the endowment fund. (4) Not less than 20 percent of the money made available for expenditure from the endowment fund from any state fiscal year shall be expended under subsection (3)(a) for capital improvements at Michigan State
- Parks.
- Citizens have the opportunity at any time to engage with the DNR, legislators or the Governor to voice their desired use of this fund and all other sources of revenues in the state park system.

DNR Response:

The State Park Endowment Fund (SPEF) was established by the voters with the passage of Proposal P in November 1994 to provide a sustainable funding mechanism for the state park system. The fund was created by using royalties from gas and mineral extractions on leased state lands. The SPEF originally received the lesser of \$10 million or 50 percent of mineral royalty and lease revenues deposited in the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) on an annual basis. Per Section 35 of the State Constitution, once the accumulated principal balance of the MNRTF reached \$500 million in May 2011, all MNRTF oil, gas, and mineral royalty revenues were deposited in the SPEF from that point forward. The SPEF will continue to receive the MNRTF mineral revenues until the accumulated principal balance of the fund reaches \$800 million. Once the accumulated principal balance reaches \$800 million, the accumulated principal limit will be annually adjusted pursuant to the Detroit Consumer Price Index. As of September 30, 2022, the accumulated principal balance of the SPEF totaled approximately \$323,542,600.

Until the SPEF reaches an accumulated principal balance of \$800 million, not more than 50% of the mineral royalty and lease revenue received can be appropriated by the Legislature. Amounts available for expenditure can be used for operations, maintenance, and capital improvements at state parks and for the acquisition of land or rights in land for state parks. With the approval of Proposal 20-1 on November 3, 2020, the Michigan Constitution now requires that not less than 20% of the money made available for expenditures from the SPEF in any fiscal year, must be spent for capital improvements at Michigan state parks.

Approximately 97% of state parks funding for operations and maintenance is generated by user fees and royalty revenues, 54% of operating revenue comes from camping and lodging revenue, 25% from Recreation Passport sales, 12% from state-owned oil, gas, and mineral royalty revenues, 6% from concessions and miscellaneous sources, and 3% from general funds (primarily for Belle Isle Park operations). Revenues from these sources also contribute to the state park capital infrastructure budget.

There is a Michigan State Park Advisory Committee in place that meets regularly and advises on policies and other matters related to the state park system. There is not a need for another advisory and/or policy group since there is already one established for the system. Most of the funds that support the system currently are not from the SPEF, but rather camping and the Recreation Passport revenues.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #11
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Ken Dalton, Individual Member
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Expansion of Michigan Pheasant Release for Hunter Recruitment

1. **WHEREAS:** the Michigan Pheasant Hunting Initiative (MPHI) and Michigan United
2. Conservation Clubs (MUCC) have worked closely to enact Public Act 262 of 2020; (MCL
3. 324.43525c); and,
4. **WHEREAS:** the goal of Public Act 262 is to recruit, retain, and reactive (R3) Michigan pheasant
5. hunters; and,
6. **WHEREAS:** to meet these goals, most pheasant hunters must now purchase a pheasant
7. license in order to pheasant hunt on public lands in Michigan; and,
8. **WHEREAS:** 100% of pheasant license proceeds fund the hiring of game breeders to release
9. rooster pheasants on public lands in Michigan; and,
10. **WHEREAS:** since the pheasant license inception, over a quarter of a million dollars have been
11. raised through pheasant license sales; and,
12. **WHEREAS:** the Department of Natural Resources selected nine state game areas (SGA) in
13. which roosters are released; and,
14. **WHEREAS:** participating SGA land managers report dramatic increase in hunter numbers since
15. enactment of PA 262; and,
16. **WHEREAS:** not all Michigan pheasant hunters are in close proximity to one of the nine state
17. game areas; and,
18. **WHEREAS:** Michigan boasts many public hunting lands with suitable hunting habitat in which
19. roosters could be released and hunted; and,
20. **WHEREAS:** Adding additional public hunting land as release sites would give many more
21. Michigan hunters an opportunity to hunt pheasants, resulting in higher pheasant license sales
22. and increasing the amount of revenue available to purchase rooster pheasants for release;
23. NOW,
24. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
25. Michigan Legislature, Department of Natural Resources, and the Natural Resources
26. Commission to support the expansion of release sites available for public pheasant hunting
27. with the goal of getting more pheasant hunters into the field.

Proposed Resolution #11
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Ken Dalton, Individual Member
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Expansion of Michigan Pheasant Release for Hunter Recruitment

Background/Problem:

In 2021, the legislature failed to include the appropriation for the 2022 pheasant release program that allowed the DNR to enter contracts and purchase birds in a timely manner. When the appropriation was finally included in a later supplemental it was quite late in the season. The 2022 release was dramatically limited compared to past years and hunter's expectations. This resolution would support expanding the program in the name of R3. An appropriation is already approved for the 2023 release season and the DNR is planning on adding more release sites than 2022.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the Michigan Legislature, Department of Natural Resources, and the Natural Resources Commission to support the expansion of release sites available for public pheasant hunting with the goal of getting more pheasant hunters into the field.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- Urges consideration of extending the boundary of December pheasant hunting northward toward M20. (2001)
- Supports extended pheasant hunting season from December 1 – January 1 in the lower peninsula north of M72. (2002)
- Supports extension of the late pheasant season to January 1 (from December 15). (2001)
- Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) work with the Michigan Legislature, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to support the Michigan Pheasant Release for Hunter Recruitment with the mission, goals, and outcomes indicated. (2017)
- Urge the DNR to implement habitat development, along with a stocking program, planting pheasants on public lands and public access lands so that all sportsmen would benefit from the stocking of pheasants throughout the state. (1983)
- Support pheasant habitat improvement program. (1975)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- More release sites across the state mean one less barrier to hunters hoping to partake in the program.
- The money is in place with plenty of time for purchases and plans to be made for expanded release sites.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Some amount of program funds should be used for habitat, and habitat degradation should be considered in site selection.
- Expanding beyond DNR Wildlife Division properties adds administrative and bureaucratic hurdles.

DNR Response:

The Department has selected state-owned lands suitable for pheasants as the locations for release. Sites are selected based on the availability of habitat and the suitability of sites for the pheasant release program. The Department strives to provide quality hunting experiences at each site while balancing the many perspectives and preferences for the program. As Funding levels increase, the Department intends to explore the possibility of expanding the program to additional sites.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #12
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Erik Schnelle, State Advisory Council President, NDA
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Green Solar Energy on Private Lands

1. **WHEREAS:** Increasingly, large scale solar energy production sites are in our future here in
2. Michigan; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** There is growing pressure to buy, or lease privately held forests and agricultural
4. property for large scale solar farms; and,
5. **WHEREAS:** Solar farms are often biological deserts covered with frequently mowed non-native
6. grass of little value to wildlife, even essential pollinating insects; and, are
7. fenced off in a manner restricting natural wildlife movement over long distances; and,
8. **WHEREAS:** Where these solar farms will be located, and how they are built and maintained is
9. of importance to all who use, live near and recreate on our Michigan's private lands because
10. these farms will eliminate wildlife habitat, displace wildlife, and reduce or eliminate recreational
11. use of those lands; and have major impacts on adjoining public and private lands; and,
12. **WHEREAS:** It may not be a good carbon trade off to cut down a forest, bulldoze a prairie,
13. eliminate current CRP lands, or other wildlife habitat to build solar farms; and,
14. **WHEREAS:** there are large paved areas, brownfield sites, large manufacturing, distribution and
15. government facilities and other areas of little or no current ecological value that could add solar
16. farms with little or no negative impact; and,
17. **WHEREAS:** With changes in zoning and design solar farms could be truly greener with reduced
18. damage to existing wildlife habitat, less mowing, more native plants, more
19. wildlife habitat, reduced use of paving, fewer toxic materials, and minimal restriction of natural
20. wildlife movement; NOW,
21. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the State
22. of Michigan and affiliated agencies, Michigan State University, the Michigan Legislature, and
23. other stakeholder groups to develop and implement improved solar zoning, site
24. recommendations, land-owner education and legislation to ensure that implement solar projects
25. that are truly beneficial to Michigan's natural resources.

Proposed Resolution #12
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Erik Schnelle, State Advisory Council President, NDA
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Green Solar Energy on Private Lands

Background/Problem:

With increased investment and interest in renewable energy in Michigan, driven in part by Gov. Whitmer's MI Healthy Climate plan, more and more large scale solar projects are being proposed across the state. Traditionally-constructed solar farms are known to be biological deserts, and working with invested stakeholders, the state of Michigan, and private landowners, a series of siting recommendations can be created that protect both private habitat, and Michigan's natural resources more broadly.

Resolution Content:

- That Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the State of Michigan and affiliated agencies, Michigan State University, the Michigan Legislature, and other stakeholder groups to develop and implement improved solar zoning, site recommendations, land-owner education and legislation to ensure that implement solar projects that are truly beneficial to Michigan's natural resources.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC's existing policies support development of solar energy supplies. Specifically, MUCC's policy that passed in 2022 supports the allowance of solar farms on public lands with clear guidelines and transparent process that only includes lands not well-suited for other uses, and the public can provide input.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- This resolution is only calling for citing recommendations, not mandates.
- These recommendations can be used in landowner education information to ensure that natural resources are being protected.
- These recommendations could provide crucial guidance to local government units making zoning and other solar siting decisions.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- MUCC has no business involving itself in private land transactions.
- Renewable energy on private lands may reduce the pressure for renewable energy facilities on public lands.

DNR Response:

The Department acknowledges the concerns raised about the potential loss of wildlife habitat and reduction of recreation opportunities on private lands due to solar energy development. The

Department also recognizes the climate, ecological, and public health benefits to the transition to carbon neutrality. Changing over to renewable energy sources will require lands to be converted from their current uses to those of energy generation. To meet clean energy goals established by the Governor and utilities, solar development will have to happen at a large scale across Michigan. This will require thousands of acres of land to be used for renewable energy production and so land use choices on both private and public lands need to be carefully evaluated and considered.

Siting renewable energy on paved areas, brownfield sites, large manufacturing, distribution and government facilities and other areas of little or no current ecological value is often a better use for these degraded lands. However, siting renewable energy in these areas is far more expensive than siting them in row crop areas. The Department supports a collaborative approach to evaluating renewable siting options, recognizing that local communities have authority over land use and zoning decisions. EGLE is convening stakeholder meetings on the topic of renewable siting as they implement the MI Healthy Climate Plan; this would be a great place for MUCC to engage. Additionally, there are opportunities for increased conservation benefits through pollinator plantings under and around solar developments. The Department is currently working on developing wildlife-friendly best management practices for solar developments.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #13
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Steve Dey & Gary Gorniak, Straits Area Sportsmen's Club
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Natural Resources Commission Meeting Locations

1. **WHEREAS:** The Natural Resource Commission (NRC) is the link between citizens of Michigan
2. and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR); and,
3. **WHEREAS:** it is vitally important for the NRC to hear from citizens of Michigan about hunting,
4. fishing, trapping, and other vital natural resource issues that come before the NRC; and,
5. **WHEREAS:** The NRC has twelve meetings a year primarily held, in Lansing; and,
6. **WHEREAS:** To make it easier for citizens to attend NRC meeting to share their thoughts at
7. NRC meetings; NOW,
8. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs will work with the NRC
9. and DNR to have 3 meetings in the Upper Peninsula, 3 meetings in Northern Michigan, 3
10. meetings in Southeast Michigan, and 3 meetings in Southwest Michigan.

Proposed Resolution #13
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Steve Dey & Gary Gorniak, Straits Area Sportsmen's Club
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Natural Resources Commission Meeting Locations

Background/Problem:

The NRC currently travels out of Lansing up to four times a year. Adding more out of Lansing meetings may result in more public participation in the process, and lower costs/burdens on citizens to attend NRC meetings.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs will work with the NRC and DNR to have 3 meetings in the Upper Peninsula, 3 meetings in Northern Michigan, 3 meetings in Southeast Michigan, and 3 meetings in Southwest Michigan.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC has policies supporting the geographic representation of appointed commissioners (2019), but nothing as it relates to NRC meeting location criteria.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Easier access for the citizens of Michigan to travel to a meeting.
- Could result in generally more public input at NRC meetings.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- The cost to the department to host these meetings would increase dramatically. Travel for about 30 DNR staff and commissioners would result in less money going to wildlife/fisheries management.

DNR Response:

The Department recognizes the importance of allowing the public to participate in Natural Resource Commission meetings to share their input on regulations. Currently, the Natural Resources Commission seeks to schedule meetings around the state to provide the public with a convenient opportunity to attend in person. For 2023, there are meetings scheduled to be held in the Upper Peninsula, Northwest Michigan, Northeast Michigan, Western Michigan, and Eastern Michigan. The remainder of the meetings are scheduled to be held in Lansing. For convenience of public participation, Lansing makes the most sense given the closer proximity to the hunter and angler community. During the 2022 hunting and fishing season, over 1,600,000 hunting and fishing licenses were sold in southern Michigan compared to approximately 325,000 licenses sold in northern Michigan and 124,000 licenses sold in the Upper Peninsula.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #14
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Patrick Hogan, Life Member
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Reaffirm MUCC's opposition to Camp Grayling expansion

1. **WHEREAS:** Camp Grayling was founded in 1913 on an initial grant of land from Grayling
2. lumber baron Rasmus Hanson to the state for military training. It includes 147,000 acres in
3. Crawford, Kalkaska and Otsego counties. Troops first started training at Camp Grayling in 1914;
4. and,
5. **WHEREAS:** the Grayling area provides quality outdoor recreational experiences; and,
6. **WHEREAS:** expanded use of Camp Grayling in recent years has adversely affected and
7. impacted the natural environment of the Grayling area; and,
8. **WHEREAS:** past experiences demonstrates that a need exists to more closely monitor and
9. regulate the environmental impact Camp Grayling activities create; and,
10. **WHEREAS:** during 2016 and 2017 the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
11. (MDMVA) conducted a site investigation on the Grayling Army Airfield (GAAF) for the presence
12. of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the groundwater. It then determined that there
13. was an off-base human health concern; and,
14. **WHEREAS:** Sheri McWhirter of The Traverse City Record Eagle reports “State records show
15. more than 1,100 drinking water samples have been tested through spring this year. Of those,
16. nearly 300 tested positive for some level of PFAS contamination. Officials found 19 homes with
17. PFAS levels at or in beyond the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s health advisory
18. standard for lifetime exposure — 70 parts per trillion — 17 near the airfield and two near Lake
19. Margrethe. Hundreds more residential well samples returned levels between that concentration
20. and non-detection.” in an article from 2019;
21. (<https://www.record-eagle.com/users/profile/Sheri%20McWhirter>); and,
22. **WHEREAS:** Former Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Oscoda, MI has caused a “Do Not Eat Deer
23. Advisory” and a “Do Not eat Fish Advisory” due to toxic PFAS contamination
24. (<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2018/10/19/dnr-do-not-eat-deer-military-base/1695100002/>); and,
25. [1695100002/](https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2018/10/19/dnr-do-not-eat-deer-military-base/1695100002/)); and,
26. **WHEREAS:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) relies on a grassroots policy process
27. to set the organization’s directives. Our members dictate the positions of the organization. In

28. 1989, MUCC members passed a resolution opposing the expansion of Camp Grayling except
29. during a national emergency, as declared by the President or Congress; and,
30. **WHEREAS:** The National Guard is asking for an expansion to lease an additional 162,000
31. acres of Department of Natural Resources (DNR) lands that is currently open to various forms
32. of public recreation including hunting, angling, and trapping. This would be in addition to the
33. 147,000 acres they are currently leasing; and,
34. **WHEREAS:** Public Act 47 of 2009 requires the DNR: “2(a) Keep land under its control open to
35. hunting unless the department determines that the land should be closed to hunting because of
36. public safety, fish or wildlife management, or homeland security concerns or as otherwise
37. required by law. 2(b) Manage land under its control to support and promote hunting and fishing
38. opportunities to the extent authorized by law.”; and,
39. **WHEREAS:** The biggest state revenue source for the DNR is the Game and Fish Protection
40. Fund. The primary source of revenue for the fund is hunting and fishing license fees; and,
41. **WHEREAS:** No money would be exchanged with the proposed lease, as it would be an
42. agreement between two State of Michigan departments. An estimated years long review
43. process incorporating MI DNR staff and resources is expected to just be incorporated
44. into the plan of work for staff in each office and division that has proposed expansion lands
45. within their respective boundaries. This on top of already short staff and underfunded; and,
46. **WHEREAS:** Camp Grayling has a track record of degrading our natural resources They
47. currently have three open PFAS/PFOA investigations on going: Lake Margrethe, Army Airfield
48. and MATES at Range 30*; and,
49. **WHEREAS:** it’s important to update and/or reaffirm MUCC’s position on historical issues as new
50. information, threats, and members change; NOW,
51. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs seeks Camp
52. Grayling’s full and total compliance with all federal, state and local environmental laws by the
53. Department of Military Affairs; and,
54. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that MUCC reaffirms its commitment to opposition to Camp
55. Grayling expansion per resolution BR011089 and opposes any further expansion; and,
56. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** MUCC will work with the DNR and National Guard to minimize
57. environmental impact and maximize recreational opportunity and any expansion that may take
58. place will not negatively impact DNR budget; and,
59. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that in those instances where public lands can no longer be
60. managed as an environmental resource for public recreation, the department be compensated
61. for by some mitigation acceptable to the Natural Resources Commission, legislature, or

62. appropriate public entity.

*<https://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse/investigations/sites-aoi/crawford-county/camp-grayling-lake-margrethe>
<https://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse/investigations/sites-aoi/crawford-county/grayling-army-airfield>
<https://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse/investigations/sites-aoi/crawford-county/camp-grayling-mates>

Proposed Resolution #14
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Patrick Hogan, Life Member
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Reaffirm MUCC's opposition to Camp Grayling expansion

Background/Problem:

In late June 2022, a proposal by the Michigan National Guard became public that would expand the Camp Grayling leased lands by 162,000 acres, more than doubling the camp's footprint. MUCC has existing policy from 1989 opposing the expansion of Camp Grayling, and we became the first statewide organization to oppose expansion. This resolution reaffirms MUCC's existing policies and modernizes the language.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs seeks Camp Grayling's full and total compliance with all federal, state and local environmental laws by the Department of Military Affairs.
- MUCC reaffirms its commitment to opposition to Camp Grayling expansion per resolution BR011089 and opposes any further expansion.
- MUCC will work with the DNR and National Guard to minimize environmental impact and maximize recreational opportunity and any expansion that may take place will not negatively impact DNR budget.
- In those instances where public lands can no longer be managed as an environmental resource for public recreation, the department should be compensated acceptable to the Natural Resources Commission, legislature, or appropriate public entity to mitigate that loss of public access.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC (Camp Grayling) seek full and total compliance with all state, federal, and environmental laws. When public land can no longer be managed as an environmental resource for public recreation that it can be compensated for by some mitigation acceptable to the Natural Resource Commission. (1989)
- MUCC opposes expansion of Camp Grayling. That land closings be limited to only the land needed for training and for the days training will take place. (1989)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- The National Guard has not provided sufficient evidence that the existing footprint is not sufficient.
- The proposal provides no guarantee that public access will not be restricted outside of firearm deer season.
- The environmental impacts of the proposal are too great to bear.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- The troops need adequate land for emerging threat and cyber warfare training.

- Michigan, specifically Camp Grayling, is uniquely suited for training needs.

DNR Response:

Contamination with per- and poly-fluoralkyl substances is related to prior issues and is separate from the current land use concern. PFAS around the state is being managed through the Michigan PFAS Action Response Team (MPART). PFAS at Wurtsmith AFB near Oscoda is distinct from and unrelated to the Camp Grayling situation.

In 2018, 20 deer were collected in association with Camp Grayling. All deer were non-detect for PFAS in their muscle tissue (meat) and only 4 deer had detections of PFOS in their liver ranging from <0.25 – 1.65 ppb. Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has a long-standing consumption advisory to not eat wild game organs throughout the state (Eat Safe Wild Game - Do not eat wild game organs (michigan.gov)). The surface water levels present in Clark's Marsh, near the former Wurtsmith Airforce Base are significantly higher than the surface water levels near Camp Grayling. Thus, the pathway for PFAS contamination in deer appears to be different around Camp Grayling than near Wurtsmith. (2018-01-11-Eat-Safe-Wild-Game-Deer-Guidelines.pdf (michigan.gov)).

The DNR does not expect that the land under consideration will be removed from use for public recreation. If this did occur, appropriate mitigation measures would be determined within the legal authorities of the DNR.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:**Position:**

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #15
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Steven Lomonaco, Region 5
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Recreational Vehicle Education

1. **WHEREAS:** Society is becoming more fast-paced and the time available for parents/guardians
2. and children to participate in weekend educational experiences is limited; and,
3. **WHEREAS:** the consolidation of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) sponsored
4. safety programs would encourage increased participation; NOW,
5. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
6. Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resource Commission and
7. instructors to study the feasibility of combining the snowmobile and off-road vehicle (ORV)
8. education programs; and,
9. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that the consolidation includes the combining of instructional
10. material, the certificate, and the final exam; and,
11. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that if the feasibility study supports consolidation action be taken
12. to combine the programs.
13. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that the DNR recreational safety staff work with current ORV
14. and snowmobile instructors to come up with a blueprint of what the new books should look like
15. and what should be on the test.

Proposed Resolution #15
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Steven Lomonaco, Region 5
Passed: December 3, 2022 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Recreational Vehicle Education

Background/Problem:

Combining the recreational vehicle program could be an effective and efficient way for the department to save on education costs, while still ensuring a quality program. Similarly combining the two educational programs can save time for interested Michiganders to get the requisite certifications before enjoying our trails.

ORV education certificate is required for riders under the age of 16 on public or private land. Similarly snowmobile education is required for operators 12-16 years of age, and recommended for all operators.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resource Commission and instructors to study the feasibility of combining the snowmobile and off-road vehicle (ORV) education programs.
- The consolidation includes the combining of instructional material, the certificate, and the final exam.
- If the feasibility study supports consolidation action be taken to combine the programs.
- The DNR recreational safety staff work with current ORV and snowmobile instructors to come up with a blueprint of what the new books should look like and what should be on the test.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) work with the MDNR Education division to establish a committee of representatives from the MDNR, Hunter Education Coordinators, and Instructors to re-evaluate the current program: to address safety concerns, criteria for successful completion, and acceptable instruction. The committee should meet semi-annually to evaluate the successes and weaknesses of the program. MUCC work with other recreational safety programs including boating, ORV, snowmobile and trapper education. (2022)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Save money for the DNR.
- Save time for the student, and the student's family.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Some folks may only be interested in one particular recreational activity, and will not want to sit through a more broadly focused class.

DNR Response:

The Department believes the feasibility behind combining these two programs in many cases, makes sense, but there would be a lot of administrative logistics that would have to be taken into consideration. These factors include legislative elements, class administration and instructor policies, as well as contractual obligations with the vendor that supplies printed and digital materials for the class. A non-biased workgroup would need to be established to look at the feasibility. This process could take a considerable amount of time.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Interim Board Resolution
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Rob Miller, Vice President & Leonard Shaner, Executive Board
Passed: October 5th, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
Title: Mandatory Deer Harvest Reporting Requirements

1. **WHEREAS:** Understanding that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) needs
2. correct and complete harvest data to effectively manage the deer herd of Michigan to ensure a
3. healthy deer herd in the state; and,
4. **WHEREAS:** The MDNR and the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) has implemented
5. mandatory deer reporting through an online system or cell phone app in Wildlife Conservation
6. Order #4 of 2022; and,
7. **WHEREAS:** It is advertised as the first year being focused on education with an effort of
8. issuing citations to be at a minimum; and,
9. **WHEREAS:** Public Act 451 of 1994 commonly referred to as NREPA calls for a criminal
10. misdemeanor penalty for those in non-compliance with an NRC order; and,
11. **WHEREAS:** This reporting process calls for the hunter to identify the location of the successful
12. hunt in a very specific manner; and,
13. **WHEREAS:** This order calls for harvest reporting to be complete within 72 hours of harvest;
14. NOW,
15. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** Following this year of education, a violation be dropped from
16. a misdemeanor crime to a civil infraction; and,
17. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** The requirement of sharing your location be changed from exact
18. property to listing the county and township where the successful hunt took place; and,
19. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** The time allowed for reporting be changed from 72 hours after
20. the harvest, or 24 hours after returning home from a remote camp with inadequate access to
21. service. Michigan United Conservation Clubs to work with the MDNR, the NRC and/or the
22. Michigan Legislature to support the above changes to this new harvest reporting requirement.

Interim Board Resolution
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Rob Miller, Vice President & Leonard Shaner, Executive Board
Passed: October 5th, 2022 Executive Board Meeting
Title: Mandatory Deer Harvest Reporting Requirements

Background/Problem:

In 2022, the DNR and NRC approved a wildlife conservation order mandating online deer harvest reporting which went into effect for that deer season. MUCC was neutral on the implementation of the mandatory reporting, but worked to educate its membership on the requirements. *Need summary data on reporting

Under NREPA, a violation of an NRC order is automatically a misdemeanor. House Bill 6354 of 2022 was introduced and would have reduced the failure to report deer harvest to a civil infraction (decriminalization)/ This bill was supported by all conservation organizations and the DNR, the legislation passed committee unanimously, but then was amended on the floor to remove NRC authority to mandate harvest reporting. MUCC requested a veto from the governor, and the bill was vetoed.

During the 2023 legislative session multiple decriminalization bills have been introduced.

Resolution Content:

- Following this year of education, a violation be dropped from a misdemeanor crime to a civil infraction.
- The requirement of sharing your location be changed from exact property to listing the county and township where the successful hunt took place.
- The time allowed for reporting would be changed from only 72 hours after the harvest, to also include 24 hours after returning home from a remote camp with inadequate access to service. Michigan United Conservation Clubs to work with the MDNR, the NRC and/or the Michigan Legislature to support the above changes to this new harvest reporting requirement.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC was neutral on the implementation of deer harvest reporting.
- MUCC testified in favor of a bill to decriminalize non-compliance in 2022.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- A misdemeanor is a steep penalty and can have ramifications on non-hunting rights, like other licensing, firearm or CPLs.
- The specific pin is too detailed of information to provide.
- Some people hunt in remote areas for more than the 72 hours, with limited or non-existent online access.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- The more detailed the data the better.
- 90% of people moved a pin within the county they said they harvested the deer in.
- An individual can designate someone to report the harvest for them.
- An automated call in option does exist.

DNR Response:

The Department supports reducing the penalty for a violation from a misdemeanor to a civil infraction. The Department is actively working with the legislature to make the necessary changes in statute to accomplish this.

The Department is evaluating feedback from the first completed year of required deer harvest reporting. While the Department sees a value in having location data within a specific county and DMU, and that information is largely protected from FOIA, we have received some negative feedback about using the location feature with the mobile application. We are currently evaluating options regarding location data.

Hunters are required to report their deer within 72 hours of harvest. Under these conditions, harvest reporting saw over 300,000 reports during its first year. An evaluation is underway to understand compliance rates after this first year. Expanding the requirement to be within 24 hours after returning home from a remote camp with inadequate access to service would introduce enforcement complexity. The current 72-hour requirement is a longer timeframe than what many other states allow. The Department will continue to evaluate the harvest reporting program and make changes to continue to improve reporting compliance.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Emergency Board Resolution
Requires 2/3rd Majority

Submitted by: Gary Gorniak, Straits Area Sportsmen's Club
Passed: February 1, 2023, Executive Board Meeting
Title: Add Cormorant Control to the DNR Budget and Implement Cormorant Control

1. **WHEREAS:** as of 2021, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has authorized the State of
2. Michigan the authority to control cormorant populations by allowing a take of 11,050 cormorants
3. on a depredation permit; and,
4. **WHEREAS:** the lack of funding and manpower has the state of Michigan applying for less than
5. one-half of our authorized amount of cormorants on the depredation permit. As a result, last
6. year (2022), only 2800 birds were dispatched, roughly 25% of our permit allowance, which
7. allows the cormorant numbers to keep increasing; and,
8. **WHEREAS:** a recent 2022 Cormorant Consumption Study by Michigan State University shows
9. a significant impact cormorants have on free-swimming fish; and,
10. **WHEREAS:** uncontrolled cormorant numbers in the early 2000s depleted the perch population
11. in what was known as a premier perch fishing destination, the Les Cheneaux Islands; the
12. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) perch creel surveys went to zero at that time. But with
13. control, it has since recovered somewhat; and.
14. **WHEREAS:** Michigan has over 1.1 Million anglers that spend over 2.3 billion dollars annually,
15. with over 45,103 jobs created by anglers; and,
16. **WHEREAS:** The Michigan DNR spends millions of dollars stocking gamefish in Michigan
17. Lakes. Just last fall, they stocked 7.8 tons of gamefish; and,
18. **WHEREAS:** we have more than 12,000 nesting pairs of cormorants in Michigan and
19. approximately 2640 single immature/Juvenile birds; and,
20. **WHEREAS:** one breeding pair of cormorants and their resulting fledglings for one breeding
21. season will consume 670 pounds of fish biomass. 2640 juvenile birds will consume an additional
22. 464,820 pounds of fish biomass, resulting in a total loss of over 8,504,820 pounds of fish
23. biomass or 4,252 tons of fish; NOW,
24. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** MUCC will work with the Michigan DNR to find the annual
25. funding, a minimum of \$250,000.00, and re-implement the very successful United States
26. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services program of cormorant control utilizing volunteers.

Interim Board Resolution
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Gary Gorniak, Straits Area Sportsmen's Club
Passed: February 1, 2023, Executive Board Meeting
Title: Add Cormorant Control to the DNR Budget and Implement Cormorant Control

Background/Problem:

The legislature did not include cormorant program appropriations in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget. This resolution is similar to existing MUCC policy supporting lethal cormorant control with the minimum annual funding request added.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC will work with the Michigan DNR to find the annual funding, a minimum of \$250,000.00, and re-implement the very successful United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services program of cormorant control utilizing volunteers.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- Support reinstating cormorant control (2017)
- A resolution requesting that MUCC urge the DNR, USDA – Wildlife Services, the tribes and authorized citizens groups to continue to cooperate in protecting our fishery resources from excessive cormorant predation. This resolution supersedes and consolidates previous MUCC resolutions on cormorants. (2011)

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- The cormorant program was effective and popular.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Existing MUCC policy covers this.

DNR Response:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released a new cormorant permit system in 2021 specifically designed for state and tribal management agencies to address cormorant-fisheries conflicts in their respective jurisdictions. Through this permit system, the DNR requests an annual lethal take of cormorants to effectively manage the cormorant-fisheries conflicts in Michigan.

Lack of funding has limited Michigan's ability to achieve target control levels, especially for fish stocking sites and inland water bodies. However, increased funding would not necessarily be used to support volunteers for full lethal control.

Increased funding will help the DNR address requirements (of the permit) in the permit system to build long-term strategies that work to limit dependence on lethal control. In addition, funding would also

increase the monitoring for both cormorant abundance as well as fisheries impacts which serve as the base justification for the permit request.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL: