



2024 MUCC Resolutions with Comments and Background Information

Prepared by MUCC Staff

Proposed Resolution #1
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Richard P. Smith, Life Member
Passed: June 3, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Weatherproofing Labels on Beverage Bottles

1. **WHEREAS:** MUCC played a key role in the adoption of Michigan's Beverage Container Deposit
2. Law, which was approved by state voters in 1976 and went into effect during December of 1978,
3. and;
4. **WHEREAS:** the purpose of the Container Deposit Law is to reduce litter and increase recycling
5. among other benefits, by putting a 10-cent deposit on many cans and bottles, and;
6. **WHEREAS:** the 10-cent deposit serves as an incentive for residents to pick up and return cans
7. and bottles that end up as litter, and;
8. **WHEREAS:** the bar codes on the labeling of discarded bottles and cans must be intact for those
9. containers to be returned for the deposits paid on them, and;
10. **WHEREAS:** the paper labeling currently being used on some glass bottles that some beverages
11. are bottled in either fall off or deteriorate when exposed to the elements, eliminating bar codes
12. from those bottles or making them unreadable, and;
13. **WHEREAS:** discarded bottles on which barcodes are damaged or missing cannot be returned
14. for deposits paid on them, circumventing the intent and purpose of the state's Container Deposit
15. Law, and;
16. **WHEREAS:** some bottlers use weatherproof labeling on their bottles that remain intact when
17. exposed to the elements, ensuring that those bottles can be returned for deposits paid on them
18. if and when they are discarded, NOW;
19. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC will work with state Legislators in drafting
20. legislation to require bottlers who sell beverages in Michigan to have weatherproof labeling on
21. their bottles to comply with the state's Container Deposit Law.

Proposed Resolution #1
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Richard P. Smith, Life Member
Passed: June 3, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Weatherproofing Labels on Beverage Bottles

Background/Problem:

Legislators and stakeholders have been toying with the idea of expanding/modifying Michigan's bottle deposit law. There is a high threshold of votes required in the legislature (75%) to change the law and finding consensus on a deal has been difficult.

The original bottle bill was an MUCC initiative, and MUCC has remained active in these discussions with both state and national partners.

There is concern that current beverage bottle labels are too easily damaged in the elements, which could dissuade individuals from picking up litter for the bottle return process. The theory is that making the bottles have some form of weatherproof labels for ease of return would incentivize people to pick up and return more litter for a deposit.

According to the Department of Treasury, 90% of cans and bottles covered under the Container Deposit Law have been returned since the law's passage.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC will work with state Legislators in drafting legislation to require bottlers who sell beverages in Michigan to have weatherproof labeling on their bottles to comply with the state's Container Deposit Law.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- Seek legislation requiring a deposit on all wine bottles, as well as fruit and fruit-flavored drink containers made of glass, plastic, or metal.
- Work to prevent depletion of the Unclaimed Bottle Deposit Fund/Environmental Trust Fund and to ensure a long-term, stable source of funding for environmental programs and MUCC work to require the bottlers and distributors to pay interest on any and all late deposits owed to the Unclaimed Bottle Deposit Fund.
- Urge National Wildlife Federation (NWF) to encourage other states to adopt legislation similar to Michigan's bottle bill, as well as pursuing federal legislation.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Incentivizes picking up litter for bottle deposit as the label will not degrade.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Added costs to manufacturers will be passed onto consumers.

- Weatherproof labels could end up being more litter that does not biodegrade.

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

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

Submitted by: Richard P. Smith, Life Member
Passed: June 3, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Expanding Michigan's Bottle Bill

1. **WHEREAS:** the state's Beverage Container Deposit Law, which went into effect during
2. December of 1978, has been a major success by reducing litter and increasing recycling among
3. other benefits, and;
4. **WHEREAS:** more than 90% of the cans and bottles covered under the Container Deposit Law
5. have been returned in most years since the law has been in effect, according to the
6. Department of Treasury, and;
7. **WHEREAS:** not all beverage containers are covered under the Container Deposit Law such as
8. sports drinks, water bottles, canned and bottled coffee, and tea, and;
9. **WHEREAS:** drink containers that do not currently have deposits on them make up a significant
10. amount of litter along Michigan roads, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** expanding Michigan's Container Deposit Law to include other beverages such as
12. sports drinks, water bottles, coffee, tea, and lemonade would reduce litter from the containers
13. these drinks come in and would further increase recycling of those containers, NOW;
14. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC will work with state Legislators in drafting
15. Legislation to expand Michigan's Container Deposit Law to include more types of beverages.

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

Submitted by: Richard P. Smith, Life Member
Passed: June 3, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Expanding Michigan's Bottle Bill

Background/Problem:

Legislators and stakeholders have been toying with the idea of expanding/modifying Michigan's bottle deposit law. There is a high threshold of votes required in the legislature (75%) to change the law and finding consensus on a deal has been difficult.

The original bottle bill was an MUCC initiative, and MUCC has remained active in these discussions with both state and national partners.

According to the Department of Treasury, 90% of cans and bottles covered under the Container Deposit Law have been returned since the law's passage. The resolution to expand Michigan's container deposit law is meant to encourage additional recycling and minimize litter.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC will work with state Legislators in drafting Legislation to expand Michigan's Container Deposit Law to include more types of beverages.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- Seek legislation requiring deposit on all wine bottles, as well as fruit and fruit-flavored drink containers made of glass, plastic, or metal.
- Work to prevent depletion of the Unclaimed Bottle Deposit Fund/Environmental Trust Fund and to ensure a long-term, stable source of funding for environmental programs and MUCC work to require the bottlers and distributors to pay interest on any and all late deposits owed to the Unclaimed Bottle Deposit Fund.
- Urge NWF to encourage other states to adopt legislation similar to Michigan's bottle bill, as well as to pursue federal legislation.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Incentivizes returning a wider array of beverage containers for bottle deposit, which would increase overall beverage containers being recycled.
- More beverage containers being recycled would mean fewer beverage containers littering Michigan roads.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Added costs to manufacturers will be passed onto consumers.

Fisheries Committee:

Fisheries Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Fisheries Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #3
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Brian Herbert, Paw Paw Conservation Club
Passed: June 3, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Develop a Cormorant Control Program Using Volunteer Licensed Hunters

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 number of cormorants on the depredation permit. As a result, in 2022,
6. only 2,800 birds were dispatched, roughly 25% of our permit allowance, which allows the
7. 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:** the 2023 MUCC Convention passed a resolution submitted by Gary Gorniak,
11. Straits Area Sportsmen's Club, to add cormorant control to the DNR Budget and re-implement
12. the very successful U. S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services program of cormorant
13. control utilizing volunteers, and;
14. **WHEREAS:** the 2023 MUCC Convention resolution provided compelling details on the
15. negative impact of cormorants on the gamefish population and economy of Michigan; and,
16. **WHEREAS:** the available workers, to carry out the cormorant control program, are limited even
17. if funding is included in the DNR budget, and;
18. **WHEREAS:** volunteer anglers and hunters are motivated to participate in the cormorant control
19. program, significantly reducing costs for achieving the population harvest goal authorized by the
20. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and;
21. **WHEREAS:** cormorants are migratory waterfowl and other waterfowl such as ducks, geese,
22. swans, cranes and mergansers are hunted, and;
23. **WHEREAS:** the Michigan DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have the authority to set
24. seasons, and bag limits for migratory waterfowl, NOW;
25. **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:** MUCC will work with the Michigan DNR and U.S. Fish and
26. Wildlife Service to create and implement a hunting permit program for volunteer hunters to
27. participate in harvesting cormorants for population management.

Proposed Resolution #3
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Brian Herbert, Paw Paw Conservation Club
Passed: June 3, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Develop a Cormorant Control Program Using Volunteer Licensed Hunters

Background/Problem:

Michigan has struggled with securing the funding and manpower to manage the migratory birds through the USFWS program. The permit proposed in this resolution is intended to help better control the state's cormorant population via a regulated hunting season.

Creating a hunting season would require federal approval as cormorants are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC will work with the Michigan DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to create and implement a hunting permit program for volunteer hunters to participate in harvesting cormorants for population management.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- 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.
- A resolution requesting that MUCC urge the DNR, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Wildlife Services, the tribes and authorized citizen groups to continue to cooperate in protecting our fishery resources from excessive cormorant predation. This resolution supersedes and consolidates previous MUCC resolutions on cormorants.
- Supports cormorant control that allows the taking of cormorants, eggs, and nests in order to reduce the population by 60-80%, supports removal from list of birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and urges funding of a study to find effective cormorant control measures.
- Urge the President, Congress, the Secretary of the Interior, and USFWS to take the necessary action to provide appropriate funding support for double-crested cormorant control efforts, and to provide appropriate leadership, coordination, control and assessment of those efforts.
- Urge the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to consider the Consumers Energy Ludington Pump Storage Facility as a priority site for future double-crested cormorant control, along with Thunder Bay, Beaver Island area, Saginaw Bay, Bay de Noc, Munising Bay, Marquette Harbor, and continue current double-crested cormorant control programs.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Cormorants have a negative impact on Michigan's gamefish population and economy.
- Saves the state money, and could generate new revenue and tourism dollars, to sell licenses and hold a regulated hunting season.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- No other state allows hunters to take cormorants.
- Data shows that the perceived impact on fisheries is overstated.
- Feds are unlikely to approve cormorants as a game species.

DNR Response:

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has historically made it their policy that they will not be designating additional migratory bird species as game species if those species were not historically game bird species. Thus, we don't expect them to authorize recreational harvest of double-crested cormorants or to create hunting harvest frameworks similar to those for waterfowl. In the absence of this authorization of hunting seasons, the Department doesn't have the legal authority to permit public harvest of double-crested cormorants.

Beginning in 2004, the State of Michigan received authorization from the US Fish and Wildlife Service under their Public Resource Depredation Order (PRDO) to take a limited number of cormorants at specific sites to protect public resources, namely wild fish in public waters. The bulk of the work under this depredation order in Michigan was performed by USDA-Wildlife Services (USDA-WS) staff to meet Department management goals with additional take performed by Tribal staff to meet their management goals. The PRDO did not authorize the public to legally take cormorants; only state, federal, and tribal agencies were authorized to take birds under the order. To meet goals regarding protection at stocking and spawning sites, USDA-WS trained members of the public and designated them as agents of USDA-WS to act on their behalf to provide non-lethal hazing and some limited lethal take. USDA-WS administered this program until the PRDO was vacated in federal court in 2016.

The Department is currently conducting cormorant management under a permitting system enacted by USFWS in 2021 which allows state and tribal agencies to take birds to protect public resources and human health and safety. The Department collaborates with USDA-WS to serve as their primary control agent by conducting work to meet management goals under the annual cormorant permits issued to the Department. At this time, USDA-WS only has the resources to control cormorants at the six large Great Lakes nesting colonies in Michigan and cannot reinstitute their program to authorize members of the public to act as agents on their behalf of the Department. The Department is unable to control cormorants at stocking sites and inland water bodies even though it is included in the annual state permit. The Department didn't create an agent program under the PRDO as it lacked the staffing and resources to adequately administer it; this remains the case.

Wildlife Committee:

Support as written.

Fisheries Committee:

Fisheries committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee, Fisheries Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #4
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Patrick Murphy, Individual Member
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Consistency in Au Sable River Trout Fishing Seasons

1. **WHEREAS:** Downstream of the headwaters of major trout streams in central and northern
2. Michigan including the Pere Marquette, Muskegon, and Manistee Rivers are regulated as Type 3
3. or Type 4 Trout Streams and/or have Special Gear Restrictions, making them open for fishing
4. opportunities year-round, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** All portions of the Au Sable River system downstream of their headwaters,
6. including the North Branch, South Branch, and Au Sable mainstream above Evans Road
7. (McKinley Bridge) are regulated as Type 4 or Special Gear Restriction streams, making them
8. open for fishing opportunities year-round, and;
9. **WHEREAS:** The Au Sable mainstream from Mio Dam to Alcona Pond is approximately 24-
10. mile uninterrupted, continuous stretch of river, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** The Au Sable River below Alcona Pond extending into Iosco County is classified
12. as a Type 4 Trout Stream, making it open for fishing opportunities year-round, and;
13. **WHEREAS:** The final portion of this uninterrupted, continuous stretch of the Au Sable
14. mainstream from Evans Road (McKinley Bridge) to 4001 Bridge is regulated as a Type 2 Trout
15. Stream in which fishing is closed from October 1 until the last Saturday in April, NOW;
16. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** Michigan United Conservation Club shall work with the
17. Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the NRC to change the classification and/or
18. fishing regulations of the stretch of the Au Sable River from Evans Road (McKinley Bridge) to
19. 4001 Bridge to provide year-round trout angling opportunities consistent with the remainder of the
20. Au Sable river system above Alcona Pond.

Proposed Resolution #4
Requires $\frac{2}{3}$ Majority

Submitted by: Patrick Murphy, Individual Member
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Consistency in Au Sable River Trout Fishing Seasons

Background/Problem:

The majority of the Au Sable River system is classified as a Type 3 or Type 4 Trout Stream, save for the stretch from Evans Road (McKinley Bridge) to 4001 Bridge. This stretch is regulated as a Type 2 Trout Stream; as a result trout fishing is closed from October to April. This resolution proposes changing the classification of this stretch of the River to allow for year-round trout angling opportunities.

In conversations with the DNR before the policy board meeting, there was no opposition at the time to changing the stream designation. There are other concerns that would need to be addressed, like bag limits or size limits, but nothing that was unachievable on its face.

There is also a local population of walleye that moves to this section of river that the locals would like to see fished more. They believe that a year-round designation could help remove some of these walleye as well.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Club shall work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the NRC to change the classification and/or fishing regulations of the stretch of the Au Sable River from Evans Road (McKinley Bridge) to 4001 Bridge to provide year-round trout angling opportunities consistent with the remainder of the Au Sable river system above Alcona Pond.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC has numerous policies relating to trout streams. No policy currently exists regarding the designation of the Au Sauble.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Increase angling opportunities in the Au Sable River system.
- There is a somewhat undesired walleye population in that area that could see increased take as a result of more opportunities in the section of river.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Changing the designation also changes size limits, bag limits, etc. Not as simple as a changing of season.
- Potential to cause overharvest.

DNR Response:

DNR Fisheries Divisions is neutral on the resolution as it has varying impacts depending on the angler interest (guides, Anglers of the Au Sable, Trout Unlimited, etc). The Department strongly suggests that

MUCC representatives work with the anglers of the Upper Au Sable River through a new citizen fishery advisory committee (April 9 is the Upper Au Sable River CAC inaugural meeting in Grayling) and present their resolution to the newly formed committee, as these are the stakeholders who fish and work on the river routinely and should provide input on the resolution. If the CACs and key stakeholders show support, Fisheries Division would also support the resolution requesting changing the section from McKinley to 4001 Landing from a Type 2 to Type 4 trout stream.

Fisheries Committee:

Fisheries committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT:
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #5
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Todd Johnson Region 4 CPB, Luke Sitton Life Member
Passed: August 26, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Supporting Mandatory Antler Point Restrictions

1. **WHEREAS:** The majority of hunters across all of Michigan's deer management units have
2. supported antler point restrictions (APRs) in every survey over the past 15 years (surveys
3. conducted by the MDNR), and;
4. **WHEREAS:** 77% of hunters in the Northwest 12 APR counties STILL approve APRs four years
5. after implementation, and;
6. **WHEREAS:** The minimum antlerless to antlered harvest ratio in most of the whitetail deer's
7. range to maintain deer densities is one antlerless per antlered deer (1:1), and;
8. **WHEREAS:** MDNR harvest data shows that under current regulations in 2022 Michigan hunters
9. only harvested .76 antlerless per antlered deer leading to out-of-control deer densities and
10. increased disease risk, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** MDNR data presented at the May 2023 Natural Resources Commission showed
12. that the Northwest 12 APR counties are leading the state in antlerless to antlered harvest ratio
13. with the #1 county (Lake 1.38 to 1), five of the top eight counties, and an average for the entire
14. NW 12 APR area of .98 antlerless to antlered ratio versus the statewide average of .76, and;
15. **WHEREAS:** MDNR Data from the CWD experiment shows that the APR counties increased
16. antlerless harvest more than the non-APR counties, and;
17. **WHEREAS:** two and three-year-old bucks are able to express 25% to 75% of their antler growth
18. potential, while one-year-olds only average 15% to 25%, NOW;
19. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC will support the adoption of antler point
20. regulations that are designed to protect the majority of yearling bucks, while also making a
21. majority of 2.5-year-old bucks eligible for harvest.

Proposed Resolution #5
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Todd Johnson Region 4 CPB, Luke Sitton Life Member
Passed: August 26, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Supporting Mandatory Antler Point Restrictions

Background/Problem:

Michigan as a whole does a poor job at harvesting antlerless deer. Due to declining hunters and some cultural phenomenon in Michigan, the antlerless harvest ratio remains very low relative to other states.

MUCC does not have policy on a number of controversial deer regulations and often maintains neutrality on these issues when they are in front of the NRC. When these resolutions have been in front of the MUCC convention they have failed to reach the requisite $\frac{2}{3}$ majority required for adoption.

The new Deer Management Initiative (DMI) was announced at the December NRC meeting, where stakeholders and unaffiliated hunters will work on a series of proposals for regulation changes. These meetings are scheduled for work during the spring/summer of 2024.

MUCC has been invited to have a seat at these workgroups. There are no preconceived plans at the DMI and APRs will certainly be part of the discussion. MUCC will maintain its neutrality, lacking any policy in one direction or another on APRs and any other deer regulation.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC will support the adoption of antler point regulations that are designed to protect the majority of yearling bucks, while also making a majority of 2.5-year-old bucks eligible for harvest.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC is neutral on the issue of APRs. The issue has come before convention numerous times before but always failed to reach the $\frac{2}{3}$ threshold of passage.

Arguments in Support of Resolution: f bucks harvested.

- Encourages the taking of more does.
- Could make Michigan a destination whitetail state.
- People like shooting big bucks.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- APRs only do one thing: make bucks bigger.
- Data does not support the assertion that it causes a significant increase in doe harvest.
- A one size fits all approach is not the best way to manage the species.
- Hold disease on the landscape longer.
- You cannot regulate yourself into a culture of shooting does.

DNR Response:

In 2020, the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) passed a resolution to keep the Department's Guidelines for Initiation, Evaluation and Review of Mandatory Antler-Point Restrictions (APRs) in place, which include a minimum 66 percent approval rating. The adopted resolution puts consideration on hold for additional mandatory APR proposals for a period of five years or until a mandatory APR study in the CWD zone is completed, whichever is longer.

The Department cannot unilaterally revise the Guidelines for Initiation, Evaluation and Review of Mandatory Antler-Point Restrictions without NRC approval and public vetting and comment.

From an enforcement standpoint regarding mandatory APRs, there is currently only one option for charging a person who violates APRs which is for the illegal taking of a deer. That comes with very substantial penalties. This poses a challenge for Conservation Officers, particularly when a person self-reports a minor/unintentional violation.

Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #6
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: George Lindquist, Executive Board
Passed: August 26 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Michigan Moose Hunt

1. **WHEREAS:** the Western UP moose of today are primarily descendants of animals brought in
2. from Canada in 1985 and 1987. Thanks to the efforts of the DNR and money from private
3. groups, primarily Safari Club International, along with other conservation organizations,
4. including MUCC, we now have a stable, sustainable population of moose in the UP, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** it is inevitable that moose within the population will die every year. Older animals
6. are more susceptible, especially bull moose. Having special hunts would bring awareness and
7. monies towards better management and growth of the UP moose population, and;
8. **WHEREAS:** with the UP moose population stable and increasing, a limited hunt will not affect
9. the existing herd and will draw attention to the moose herd of the UP, and;
10. **WHEREAS:** the monies gained by a moose hunt can and should be earmarked for UP moose
11. research, habitat work, and development of a long-term management plan to ensure the viability
12. of this iconic species, and;
13. **WHEREAS:** only Michigan residents can apply for the drawing of the moose lottery and such
14. tags would be a “once in a lifetime” tag, and;
15. **WHEREAS:** the hunts would be overseen by DNR personnel to ensure that the animals
16. harvested will not harm the existing moose population. IE, the harvest of only older bulls, and;
17. **WHEREAS:** these drawings should be conducted as a lottery, much like our current elk hunts,
18. where every sportsman of the State of Michigan has an opportunity to draw one of these
19. coveted tags, NOW;
20. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC work with the Michigan DNR, Natural Resources
21. Commission, and Legislature to conduct a very limited bull moose hunt in the UP of Michigan
22. and a separate lottery, much like the current elk lottery, with monies derived going to sustaining
23. and growing this iconic species in Michigan.

Proposed Resolution #6
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: George Lindquist, Executive Board
Passed: August 26 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Michigan Moose Hunt

Background/Problem:

Moose populations in Michigan have remained relatively stable over the past 10 years, at just under 500 animals. The population grew 10% from 1996 to 2008 but has stalled at less than 1% from that time through 2023.

The Moose Council's final recommendations, concluded in 2011, included a limited hunt at the current population estimate, with the money raised being earmarked for moose management. The author of the resolution represented MUCC on that council, and the language in the resolution and recommendation mirror one another.

The council recommendations also included a maximum harvest of 10 bulls in the first year of the hunt, and that the hunt take place in the core moose area. Before a harvest goal could be decided, consultation with each tribal unit in the area must come to an agreement on tribal and state harvest totals.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC work with the Michigan DNR, Natural Resources Commission and Legislature to conduct a very limited bull moose hunt in the UP of Michigan and a separate lottery, much like the current elk lottery, with monies derived going to sustaining and growing this iconic species in Michigan.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC encourages the DNR to create a moose management plan understanding the need for additional funds and personnel to ensure a sustainable moose population that supports hunting as a management tool.
- MUCC staff should work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Legislature to enact higher restitution payments for moose poaching, with restitution continuing to go into the Game and Fish Protection Fund. There should also be a lifetime loss of hunting privileges in Michigan, as well as the other states that are a part of the Wildlife Violator Compact Law.
- MUCC supports culling moose on Isle Royale National Park to manage the population and protect the island's vegetation and that the public be permitted to do the culling through a limited entry drawing from groups of two to four participants that would purchase a moose culling permit; and MUCC supports such measures as an alternative to artificial relocation (human placement) of predator species to this island, such as wolves.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- The moose population has remained stable suggesting that the species could handle a limited hunt.

- Moose-car collisions are on the rise, a hunt could help lower that number.
- Increased revenue from applications/license sales.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- The population has not reached the threshold initially indicated as a trigger for a moose hunt.
- DNR lacks the resources to effectively manage a hunt.
- The potential increased revenue is not enough to make a substantial difference in moose management.

DNR Response:

The initiation of a moose hunt in Michigan's Upper Peninsula is based on the recommendations of the 2011 Moose Advisory Council which recommended a minimum 3% annual long-term growth rate and only occur in the core area identified by the DNR, as well as projections from a moose harvest model developed by researchers in 2011. The Department has been surveying the western U.P.'s core moose population since 1997, typically every other winter. Despite promising data that showed rapid growth in the late 1990's and early 2000's, the overall moose population growth rate is less than 1% annual growth since 2011. The 2023 survey marks the first survey completed since 2019 due to scheduling conflicts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The western U.P. moose core range covers about 1,400 square miles in parts of Marquette, Baraga, and Iron counties.

The 2023 moose survey estimate was 426 individuals, which is not statistically different from the 2019 estimate of 509 individuals. Looking at demographic data, with respect to previous surveys, the Department observed a comparable – but low – cow-to-calf ratio and percentage of calf numbers. Accordingly, the Department observed a lesser percentage of twins during this survey (9%) compared to the 10-year average of 15%. Fewer twins, in combination with a lesser bull-to-cow ratio could point to a recruitment issue, which is the number of individuals added to a population over a given time by either births or immigration. The Department will continue to monitor recruitment in the population in future surveys to determine whether a trend is developing or if 2023 was a poor calf year.

Without having updated information on moose survival and reproductive rates, parasite loads, and understanding the impact of vehicle collisions on the low annual growth rate of the moose population we are unable to predict if Michigan's UP moose can sustain a limited hunt. Even mild additive mortality on the moose herd can have drastic impacts on the sustainability of their population when population growth rates are less than 1%. Currently, no other Great Lake's state holds a moose hunt, even with similar or larger populations than Michigan's Upper Peninsula. In addition, with the Moose Hunting Advisory Council's recommendation to only allow moose hunting if a growth rate of greater than 3% is maintained, the Department is not recommending implementing a hunting season. The same was true over the past several survey result years.

The current drawing system may not be able to support a moose lottery. The system's elk drawing functions were developed very specifically for our elk licensing business rules. Further investigation would be needed to determine if elk drawing functions can be adapted for a moose drawing, or if a new drawing system would be needed for moose.

MUCC Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #7
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Zach Snyder, Region 8 CPB
Passed: August 26, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Recommend Michigan DNR to allow transfer of “remaining” points to those who qualify

1. **WHEREAS:** currently, applicants who are selected in the bear drawings may transfer their
2. successfully drawn tag success to an eligible person they know, or to an individual on
3. the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) hunt waiting list, and;
4. **WHEREAS:** currently an eligible person is described as a hunter under the age of 16 who
5. applied and was not drawn for a bear license, or any person who has been diagnosed with an
6. advanced illness, and;
7. **WHEREAS:** In 2023 140 people were on the DNR waitlist, and;
8. **WHEREAS:** of the 140 on the waitlist only 21 were donated a license, and;
9. **WHEREAS:** currently, upon purchasing a leftover bear tag, or successfully drawing a bear
10. license, bear preference points are reset to zero, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** many applicants possess an excess amount of points necessary to draw their
12. desired tag, and;
13. **WHEREAS:** for example, a hunter may have 18 points, but choose to hunt a unit that only
14. requires 8 points to draw their tag, and;
15. **WHEREAS:** under the current design, those points are reset to zero, rather than a potential
16. remaining points balance, 10 being the remainder from the example given, and;
17. **WHEREAS:** those remaining points could be transferred, or donated to an eligible person,
18. allowing more youth and those with advanced illness more opportunity to receive a tag, NOW;
19. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC work with the DNR to allow any points
20. beyond what is necessary for an applicant to draw their tag to be transferable to those eligible
21. within the already established guidelines of the DNR hunt transfer program.

Proposed Resolution #7
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Zach Snyder, Region 8 CPB
Passed: August 26, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Recommend Michigan DNR to allow transfer of “remaining” points to those who qualify

Background/Problem:

Michigan has a program where successful applicants for a bear tag can donate their tag to someone with an advanced illness. This list is maintained by the DNR and individuals meeting the criteria fill out the proper paperwork and get added to the list. At the time of writing the resolution the DNR communicated about 140 individuals were on that list, and about 20 licenses had been transferred, this number does not count people who donated a tag to a specific individual rather than someone on the list.

An individual can also transfer a tag to a minor child if they choose.

The idea behind the resolution is that if you have 10 points and the tag you wish to draw would normally only require you to use 7 points, that the individual could donate those excess three points to someone on the advanced illness list.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC work with the DNR to allow any points beyond what is necessary for an applicant to draw their tag to be transferable to those eligible within the already established guidelines of the DNR hunt transfer program.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- 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.
- Favors the adoption of a preference point system for hunts requiring a permit in MI.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Would expand opportunities for individuals with advanced illnesses to obtain a bear license.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Implementation on the DNR side could be tricky, deciding what point(s) were excess.

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.

Points are not currently transferable from one person to another to ensure the fairness and integrity of the point system. Accordingly, the Department's drawing system does not offer an automated point transfer function; any movement of points from one person and to another would be an entirely manual process or require substantial system changes, creating additional administrative burden and expense.

Transfer of points would negatively impact point system data integrity since point and application history would no longer be in alignment for transfer donors and recipients. This would create confusion and complication for hunters and Department staff responsible for customer service and point system audit.

Additionally, BMU "point requirements" are unknown until after the drawing. The drawing system simply awards licenses to applicants with the greatest number of points until all tags have been awarded. Drawing results can be manually analyzed by Department staff after the drawing to determine the minimum number of points that were required to draw tags in each BMU, but any attempt to determine "excess points", or to transfer points, would be an entirely manual process and/or require substantial system changes.

It is not clear from the resolution if the hunter with excess points may select another hunter with limited points to receive the excess points. This would also add a layer of administrative complexity and system enhancements

Currently, the process for transferring drawing success is identical for bear and elk. The method for transferring "excess" preference points outlined in the resolution could not be directly applied to elk chances. This would create inconsistency and complexity, and likely additional confusion for applicants.

Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #8
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Eric Braden, Executive Board
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Boat Registration Fee Increases

1. **WHEREAS:** The Michigan State Waterways Commission (MSWC) Resolution No. 10-2023-02
2. indicates boat registration fees, along with a portion of the gasoline tax, support the Waterways
3. Funds available for operation and maintenance of recreational boating facilities and water safety
4. law enforcement, these fees have remained unchanged since 1993, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** a 2019 Waterways Facilities needs assessment concluded that there was a high
6. priority need of \$92M just to improve state-administered recreational boating facilities including
7. Harbors and Boating Access Sites in addition there are critical infrastructure needs for the Grant-
8. in-Aid harbors, and;
9. **WHEREAS:** A recent Interoffice Communication from Ron Olson, the Chief of Parks and
10. Recreation Division reiterated that "Inflation, the costs to operate, and an aging infrastructure
11. remain critical needs with insufficient funding", and;
12. **WHEREAS:** In March of 2023 MUCC membership approved a resolution to bring pontoon
13. registration fees in line with other vessels of a similar size, and;
14. **WHEREAS:** The MSWC recommends that the fees be gradually increased to bring them in line
15. with inflation, NOW;
16. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** MUCC will work with the legislature, DNR, and stakeholders to
17. increase boater registration fees to ensure that the revenues generated will continue to augment
18. the resources required to operate and maintain the Michigan State Waterways Program, including
19. the public DNR-owned and Grant-in-Aid harbor facilities and boating access sites and the overall
20. infrastructure and operations needed to support a sustainable, statewide recreational boating
21. program.

Proposed Resolution #8
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Eric Braden, Executive Board
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Boat Registration Fee Increases

Background/Problem:

In 2022 MUCC staff met with representatives from MBIA. The MBIA board approved pursuing a substantial increase in boat registration fees, which have not been updated since the early 1990's. This legislation is likely to be introduced in 2024, and lacking MUCC policy staff flagged the issue for membership to consider. After working through the fisheries committee the draft was passed at the December 2023 Conservation Policy Board meeting.

The intention from the side of the MBIA was for the money raised to go to the waterways fund to fund new access sites or update existing ones.

MUCC's membership passed a resolution in support of raising pontoon boat fees to be in line with other vessels based on length, but our policy remains silent outside of that exception.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC will work with the legislature, DNR, and stakeholders to increase boater registration fees to ensure that the revenues generated will continue to augment the resources required to operate and maintain the Michigan State Waterways Program, including the public DNR-owned and Grant-in-Aid harbor facilities and boating access sites and the overall infrastructure and operations needed to support a sustainable, statewide recreational boating program.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- 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.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Would raise a substantial amount of money to fund new/updated boat access sites.
- The industry is already in support.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Fee increases just make it more expensive to participate.
- Added revenue could be gained from registration of currently non-regulated watercraft.

DNR Response:

The Department supports the proposed resolution. The Michigan State Water Ways Commission is in support of updating boating registration fees and to restructure the registration rates for pontoon boats. Additional revenue generated from increase fees would go into the restricted Water Way fund to support the backlog of recreation boating critical

infrastructure renovations, which include boating access sites and public harbors of refuge.

Fisheries Committee:

Fisheries Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Fisheries Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #9
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Rob Miller, Vice President, Mark Tarman, Individual Member
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Treestands on Public Lands

1. **WHEREAS:** Michigan Wildlife Conservation Order (WCO) states that if you hunt on public land,
2. your tree stand must be portable and your name and address, Michigan driver's License number,
3. or DNR sports card number must be affixed in legible English that can be easily read from the
4. ground, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** WCO lays out the dates a blind or stand can be left on public land, which varies by
6. season, and;
7. **WHEREAS:** WCO also states if you leave a tree stand or blind in the woods overnight on public
8. land, that stand becomes public domain, and therefore, anybody can use it, and;
9. **WHEREAS:** To purposefully use another hunter's setup is arguably an unethical choice that most
10. often creates immediate conflict between all parties involved, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** Michigan has +/- 8.2 million acres of public land available between state and
12. federally owned, and;
13. **WHEREAS:** Michigan offers more public land opportunities than any other state
14. east of the Mississippi, and;
15. **WHEREAS:** There is a genuine concern of liability should someone get hurt while using someone
16. else's equipment, NOW;
17. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** MUCC supports NRC action to change the current regulation
18. that allows an individual to utilize another individual's legally placed hunting equipment, such as a
19. tree stand or other portable blind on public property, and make it illegal to knowingly use a legally
20. placed stand or blind that does not belong to you or one of your immediate hunting party, without
21. written permission to do so.

Proposed Resolution #9
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Rob Miller, Vice President, Mark Tarman, Individual Member
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Treestands on Public Lands

Background/Problem:

Currently in the Michigan Wildlife Conservation Order (WCO) to place a treestand on public land one must follow a number of criteria. One regulation is for the owner to mark the treestand in a conspicuous place, with the owner's name, address, and driver's license or DNR sportcard number.

If a stand is placed on public land neither the stand nor the area is considered reserved by the owner and it is perfectly legal for anyone to use. An individual may not use an illegally placed treestand on public land, regardless of ownership.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC supports NRC action to change the current regulation that allows an individual to utilize another individual's legally placed hunting equipment, such as a tree stand or other portable blind on public property and make it illegal to knowingly use a legally placed stand or blind that does not belong to you or one of your immediate hunting party, without written permission to do so.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- A resolution requesting that MUCC work with the DNR and the NRC to modify the rules for Portable Ground Blinds so that they are the same as those for tree stands and ladder stands.
- MUCC opposes the construction of permanent tree stands and urges the enactment of legislation which would specifically prohibit the use of all raised platforms and climbing aids which are secured to a tree with nails or any other means that penetrate the bark.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Could prevent conflict between hunters if the stand was not viewed as public.
- Liability concerns exist should someone get injured using another individual's stand.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- The land is public, for public use. If adopted this would essentially mean one could claim an area, which cannot be done.
- Enforcement is going to be difficult.
- What if the individual genuinely did not see the proper marking?

DNR Response:

The Wildlife Conservation Order does not allow a hunter to occupy the treestand of another hunter. Specifically, section 2.8(4) specifies that an individual taking an animal shall not use or occupy a scaffold or raised platform without having first etched, engraved, implanted, burned, printed, or painted

on the scaffold or raised platform, the name and address, complete Michigan driver's license number, or DNR sportcard number of the user in legible English easily read from the ground. The intention is for the identifying information on the treestand to belong to the individual using the treestand.

Placing a treestand on public land does not signify the sole right to hunt that area. A hunter may, for example, sit at the base of the tree where another hunter has placed a treestand.

Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #10
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Erik Schnelle, Michigan State Council – National Deer Association
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: MUCC Support For DMU Antlerless Harvest Goals

1. **WHEREAS:** under-harvesting or overharvesting antlerless deer can have a damaging effect on
2. deer herds, deer hunting and wildlife habitat, and;
3. **WHEREAS:** achieving an appropriate level of antlerless harvest is necessary to responsibly
4. manage deer densities, deer health and wildlife habitat quality, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** the appropriate level of antlerless harvest will vary for every deer management unit
6. (DMU) in the state of Michigan, and;
7. **WHEREAS:** harvest goals are widely used and a successful tool for managing wildlife and
8. fisheries, and;
9. **WHEREAS:** Michigan has successfully implemented a mandatory reporting system for deer that
10. enables hunters to track harvest in near real-time throughout the deer seasons and alert hunters
11. on progress toward goal achievement via email, and;
12. **WHEREAS:** Michigan has a need to harvest more antlerless deer in many parts of the state yet
13. 75% of the state's hunters won't shoot an antlerless deer, only 17% of the state's hunters take one
14. antlerless deer and 8% of Michigan's hunters take more than one antlerless deer, and;
15. **WHEREAS:** Antlerless harvest has declined by about 28% over the last 20 years, NOW;
16. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC work with the DNR and NRC to implement annually
17. adjusted DMU level antlerless harvest goals, educate and inform hunters regarding those goals,
18. provide in-season information to hunters on goal achievement, and in cases of significant
19. overharvest allows for the closing of seasons or limitation of additional harvest.

Proposed Resolution #10
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Erik Schnelle, Michigan State Council – National Deer Association
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: MUCC Support For DMU Antlerless Harvest Goals

Background/Problem:

The DNR has made no secret of the desire for an increased antlerless harvest in the lower peninsula, particularly the lower third. However, there have been no clearly stated harvest goals for each region, or DMU.

Other species, bear for instance, have clearly defined and transparent harvest goals. The argument is this level of transparency makes it easier for Michigan DNR, hunters, and stakeholders to work together towards a clear set of communicated goals.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC work with the DNR and NRC to implement annually adjusted DMU level antlerless harvest goals, educate and inform hunters regarding those goals, provide in-season information to hunters on goal achievement, and in cases of significant overharvest allow for the closing of seasons or limitation of additional harvest.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC will bring the issue of CWD and TB to the forefront and work with the DNR to enforce existing laws, find alternative funding other than what is provided by existing fish and wildlife funds and continue education efforts and promote hunter involvement in combating these diseases. MUCC also supports additional harvesting of does in DMUs through methods of later seasons and reduced doe tag prices and other means to help promote the take of does to maintain a balanced herd. MUCC continues to support baiting bans. MUCC should work with QDMA and other stakeholders to help DNR and NRC with this disease.
- Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) work with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Natural Resources Commission (NRC), to manage Michigan's deer herd for health, buck to doe ratio, and quality not quantity. MUCC will support changes that would implement a three-year trial of a regulation that would:
 - Offer a discounted doe tag with the combination license (3 tags), in DMUs where antlerless harvest is valid; and,
 - That the DNR and NRC provide sufficient additional antlerless tags to meet the needs of managing the deer herd in the Deer Management Units (DMU).

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- An added level of transparency would help hunters and stakeholders work with the DNR to achieve harvest goals.
- These goals are not meant to be quotas.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- The DNR does not have the resources or the staff to provide these goals down to a DMU level.
- Lacking a funding source, to perform these tasks would take away from existing work.

DNR Response:

Developing an antlerless harvest goal is implied to ensure a decrease in the population or a decrease in disease prevalence for the next year. This means that we must have a real-time knowledge and accurate understanding of the current deer population, including overall population size, sex ratio, and fawn recruitment.

Developing an antlerless harvest goal would imply that “X number of deer must be harvested to decrease the population”. Certainly, this can be estimated, but confidence in this knowledge, especially from a year-to-year perspective, is something that has escaped deer biologists for years. That information is extremely data-hungry and developing an estimate across a broad area would be extremely labor intensive. We don’t have the ability to defend any goals we bring forward to ensure that a management goal would be met.

Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #11
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Merle Jones, MTPCA
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Support of Year Round Coyote Hunting

1. **WHEREAS:** MUCC has long supported controlling the coyote population via hunters and trappers
2. in Michigan passing resolutions supporting night time predator hunting with centerfire firearms
3. (2016), allowing the use of #3 and #4 buckshot at night (unanimous vote 2013), expanded
4. hound hunting opportunity at night (2012), and the taking of coyotes during deer season (2010),
5. among others, and;
6. **WHEREAS:** Coyotes are abundant in all 83 Michigan counties, coyotes have expanded their
7. populations into all major urban areas and Michigan communities continue to struggle with coyote
8. population issues, and;
9. **WHEREAS:** Coyotes have no natural predators in the majority of their range, coyotes carry
10. diseases like rabies and mange and coyotes have a virtually limitless capacity for population
11. expansion, and;
12. **WHEREAS:** Coyote population management benefits the ecosystem, coyote health, all MUCC
13. stakeholders, and the residents of Michigan, and;
14. **WHEREAS:** Hunting is one of the most efficient methods of population management, and modern
15. coyote hunting has experienced participation growth statewide, and;
16. **WHEREAS:** Damage or nuisance control regulations during any restricted seasons do not allow
17. for the continued statewide take required to effectively keep coyote populations in check, NOW;
18. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs support “year-round”
19. Coyote Hunting, and stand in opposition to any limitations, restrictions or bans that would reduce
20. the opportunities for the vital management of coyote populations, lacking any significant biological
21. justification.

Proposed Resolution #11
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Merle Jones, MTPCA
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Support of Year Round Coyote Hunting

Background/Problem:

At the August 2023 Furtaker User Group meeting the DNR floated the idea of closing coyote season from April-August, as it had been up until 2016 when it was made a year round open season.

The justification for such a change was not biological, but rather that the DNR was worried the legislature would step in and take away some, or all, of the coyote opportunity and the sport would be lost.

The closing of the season would be something we, as stakeholders and participants, could point to as a protection we have to protect coyote populations in Michigan.

A majority of stakeholders at the meeting supported the closure, mostly UP trapping groups. To date, it is unclear if the DNR will make the proposal to the NRC formally when furbearer regulations come up in early 2024.

Resolution Content:

- Michigan United Conservation Clubs support “year-round” Coyote Hunting, and stand in opposition to any limitations, restrictions or bans that would reduce the opportunities for the vital management of coyote populations, lacking any significant biological justification.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- Urge the MDNR to allow for the year round taking of coyotes and establish year round, safe methods and areas of coyote hunting and trapping in urban state parks and recreation areas.
- MUCC supports the use of centerfire rifles at night for coyote hunting.
- Support the taking of the coyotes during the regular firearm deer season in the Lower Peninsula as a necessary management tool for coyote control.
- A resolution requesting that MUCC go on record as supporting reinstating the legal taking of coyotes during the rifle deer season in the Upper Peninsula

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Coyotes exist in all 83 counties, populations grow faster than hunters can manage it.
- With legal methods of take there is no way hunters can have population level impacts.
- No biological justification for season closure.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Close the season to show the legislature we are doing something to protect coyotes.

- Previous season closure was to protect nursing mothers and pups.

DNR Response:

In 2016, the Natural Resources Commission requested the Department develop a recommendation to expand the coyote hunting season. The coyote hunting season was changed from July 15 to April 15, to year-round. At the time, the Department did not expect a year-round season to have a significant biological impact at the statewide level. Instead, the Department felt that in some localized areas, some temporary reductions in coyote densities may occur, but these reductions would be based on the level of increase in harvest and likely to be short-lived.

As expected, estimated statewide coyote harvest during 2016-2020 did not increase in response to implementation of a year-round season. Similarly, the estimated average number of coyotes harvested per hunter did not increase during this time either. Regardless of hunting season dates, coyotes can be taken year-round on private land if a coyote is doing damage or physically present where it could imminently cause damage. Additionally, an individual may not hunt or train dogs on game (including coyote) from April 16 to July 7.

The resolution advocates for the standing “in opposition to any limitations, restrictions or bans that would reduce the opportunities for the vital management of coyote populations, lacking any significant biological justification.” The Department supports limitations and restrictions for many activities in order to ensure that health and human safety is a priority. Firearm restrictions are in place for safety reasons regarding the take of coyotes during certain times of year, particularly in the limited firearm zone.

Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #12
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Travis White, Individual Member
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Protecting the High-Quality Lake Trout Fishery of Stannard Rock

1. **WHEREAS:** Stannard Rock is an isolated reef complex in Central Lake Superior, comprising nine
2. square miles or 0.03% of Lake Superior, which is home to a finite population of wild, native lake
3. trout with unique population dynamics of higher quality (particularly a broad size distribution),
4. compared to other parts of Lake Superior [1]. The reef complex features rock formations and
5. bathymetric characteristics that concentrate fish in certain areas, making vertical jigging and
6. shallow water casting effective and preferred angling methods, and;
7. **WHEREAS:** Stannard Rock has the highest catch rates measured in Lake Superior for lake trout
8. [2], and the catch rate of trophy-size fish (Michigan's Master Angler Program defines this as lake
9. trout greater than 34 inches in length) is markedly greater at Stannard Rock than elsewhere in
10. Lake Superior [1], and;
11. **WHEREAS:** Michigan's state record lake trout, weighing 61.5 pounds at 49 inches in length, was
12. caught jigging at Stannard Rock in 1997. For these reasons, Stannard Rock is a world-renowned
13. fishery for trophy lake trout, described by many anglers as the best lake trout fishing destination in
14. the Great Lakes, and;
15. **WHEREAS:** Although the status of Stannard Rock lake trout is healthy, a modest increase in
16. mortality could threaten sustainability [3]. Progressive anglers have voiced an interest in
17. developing protective measures for offshore Lake Trout, and establishing a special status for
18. these sites would be logical [2], and;
19. **WHEREAS:** at Stannard Rock the water temps are very cold during most of the year and the lake
20. trout are a slow-growing, late-maturing species with generally low reproductive potential [5].
21. Though long-lived, both males and females, on average, do not reach sexual maturity until six to
22. eight years of age [6]. Length-at-age studies have found that lake trout at Michigan's Master
23. Angler minimum size of 34 inches range from 15 to more than 40 years of age in Lake Superior
24. [7]. The population of lake trout at Stannard Rock is one of few in Lake Superior that presently
25. includes fish of this caliber; the high relative abundance over a small geographic area results in
26. high catchability of this caliber of fish at Stannard Rock, surpassing other fisheries around the lake
27. [1], and;
28. **WHEREAS:** the Stannard Rock Lake Trout are wild, native strains, including all four major

29. ecotypes found in Lake Superior (lean, siscowet, humper, and redbfin). Stannard Rock has ample
30. suitable spawning habitat and supports natural reproduction. Tagging studies have shown that
31. there is little migration of fish between Stannard Rock and nearshore fisheries [1]. If stocking
32. is needed in the future this would alter the genetic makeup of the population at this fishery, and;
33. **WHEREAS:** the Stannard Rock Lake Trout population is largely isolated from other populations in
34. Lake Superior and has experienced significant increases in exploitation by charter and
35. recreational anglers in recent years, resulting in higher angling effort and harvest [1]. Non-charter
36. angling effort is increasing, but to what extent is largely unknown [1]. External factors such as
37. social media, improved marine forecasting, and fishing technologies such as live sonar
38. (LiveScope) have made this fishery more accessible than ever before. The mortality rate for lake
39. trout at Stannard Rock has been found to be higher than popular nearshore fishing areas, which
40. points to the impact of concentrated angling pressure [1], and;
41. **WHEREAS:** DNR tagging studies have found a higher tag return rate from fish tagged at
42. Stannard Rock compared to nearshore fisheries, suggesting a high level of fishery exploitation [1].
43. Charter boat reporting data has shown a concerning trend in the past five years of a rapid decline
44. in lake trout catch rates at Stannard Rock [1]. This brings into question this population's ability to
45. sustain the qualities that make it unique, including the size and age distribution of its members,
46. and also its total population, and;
47. **WHEREAS:** In a recent DNR survey of more than 1100 anglers, 85% of charter and 79% of non-
48. charter favored stronger regulations to protect the fishery at Stannard Rock [1][2]. The current
49. Michigan DNR lake trout fishing regulations have the Stannard Rock area lumped inside a zone
50. that is part of the highest limit of lake trout, the five fish a day limit area, and currently allows for
51. harvest of any size fish (limiting each angler to one fish over 34 inches; per day). High catch
52. rates at Stannard Rock are possible, thus significant harvest is allowed under current regulations,
53. and;
54. **WHEREAS:** High catch and release mortality suggests that a length-based regulation may be
55. ineffective in reducing harvest because of this mortality; lowering possession limits could be more
56. effective in protecting the fish population [1]. The same recent DNR survey found that of those
57. that targeted Lake Trout, anglers preferred to harvest Lake Trout between 20-25 inches (62%),
58. followed by 15-20 inches (25%), 25-30 inches (11%), and 30+ inches (2%), which could help
59. inform potential changes to size limits or the design of slot limits to reduce harvest [2]. Party
60. fishing is difficult or impossible to enforce here, and as such party limits might also be considered
61. as an alternative to individual angler limits. This could afford the opportunity to reduce total
62. harvest and harvest of many trophy fish by a single party, and;

63. **WHEREAS:** recent studies have shown that hooking mortality is a high factor on the survival of
 64. released lake trout [4]. Total mortality rates are comprised of not only angler harvest but also
 65. delayed mortality post-release. This combination of harvest and practicing catch and release
 66. angling might yield excessively high mortality rates for lake trout at Stannard Rock. To date, no
 67. studies have been done to evaluate catch-and-release methods (such as the use of deep water
 68. release devices) to reduce catch-and-release mortality, and;

69. **WHEREAS:** Jigging and shallow water casting are preferred fishing methods over trolling, and the
 70. average water temperature is cooler year-round at Stannard Rock. Angler education and
 71. behaviors may prove to be important to achieving goals to manage the Stannard Rock fishery, in
 72. light of our current understanding of factors contributing to catch and release mortality, and;

73. **WHEREAS:** there are other unique offshore fisheries across the Great Lakes that might also
 74. benefit from special designations as “trophy fishing areas”. There are already areas in Lakes
 75. Huron and Michigan have special “lake trout refuge”; designations in place that completely
 76. restrict fishing. Lake Superior has none of these areas but could benefit from having areas with
 77. special regulations to conserve its historic lake trout fisheries. “Refuge” areas that are closed to
 78. fishing are not being advocated for on Lake Superior as part of this resolution but rather an
 79. alternative designation that allows fishing while also conserving the high-quality fishery, and;

80. **WHEREAS:** The DNR conducts periodic surveys of its lake trout stock and fisheries across Lake
 81. Superior. Stannard Rock was most recently surveyed between 2011 and 2015, and prior to that
 82. the most recent survey was conducted circa 1975. The more recent survey found a slightly lower
 83. relative abundance of lake trout than the prior survey, but overall the population metrics
 84. indicate that Stannard Rock is a high-quality lake trout fishery, exhibiting broad size distribution
 85. and high relative abundance of lake trout [3]. Many fish were sampled that would meet or
 86. exceed Master Angler size, including individuals greater than 40 inches in length (a benchmark
 87. widely accepted by the North American fishing community as trophy size for lake trout). This
 88. caliber of fish has been captured at a much lower frequency in other sampling areas across Lake
 89. Superior[1]. DNR sampling does not effectively capture the largest fish in a population due to gear
 90. limitations, and;

91. **WHEREAS:** the draft Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan 2023–2033 establishes
 92. “Objectives for Lean Lake Trout: Maintain populations of Lake Trout that support high-quality
 93. recreational fisheries at Stannard Rock, Big Reef, and Isle Royale; Management Actions and
 94. Evaluations: Continue to survey and assess the status of offshore Lake Trout populations (Isle
 95. Royale, Stannard Rock, Big Reef, and Klondike Reef-Caribou Island complex). Work with
 96. anglers and citizen advisory committees to develop appropriate regulations to achieve

97. population objectives.” [2], and;

98. **WHEREAS:** the 2023 Great Lakes Decree resolves that the portions of Lake Superior Grids

99. 1130, 1131, 1230, and 1231 known as Stannard Rock will be closed to Commercial Fishing,

100. specifically, the area that is east of a line of longitude at -87.28 degrees, south of a line of

101. latitude at 47.27 degrees, west of a line of longitude at -87.11 degrees, and north of a line of

102. latitude at 47.13 Degrees, NOW;

103. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC work with the DNR to educate the public on

104. Catch and Release to protect the high-quality Lake Trout fishing destination that is the

105. legendary Stannard Rock fishery, and;

106. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that MUCC encourage and support the DNR to conduct more

107. frequent, regular biological assessments in addition to social science to better understand and

108. quantify the attributes that make Stannard Rock a unique fishery on the Great Lakes, and;

109. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that MUCC work with the DNR to study the effectiveness of

110. deep water release methods to increase survivability over surface release and explore other

111. methods of maintaining the Stannard Rock lake trout population dynamics. This might include

112. defining baseline population metrics and establishing management criteria to maintain or

113. improve on those metrics over time through available management tools, regulations, and

114. angler behaviors, and;

115. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that MUCC work with the DNR and NRC to create a zone and

116. designation to recognize and protect the Stannard Rock fishery, potentially with different

117. regulations informed by science, to protect its high-quality status against increasing angling

118. exploitation, consistent with the management objectives established by the draft Lake

119. Superior Fisheries Management Plan 2023–2033.

Proposed Resolution #12
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Travis White, Individual Member
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Protecting the High-Quality Lake Trout Fishery of Stannard Rock

Background/Problem:

The Stannard Rock lake trout fishery is a premier lake trout destination in the country. Several state records have come from this particular area.

The area is incredibly difficult to reach, being more than a 40-mile run from Marquette. Fishing in this area is largely restricted to anglers using guides due to the remoteness of the area. For similar reasons angling regulations are difficult to enforce.

Due to the depths and water temperature there can be relatively high catch and release mortality. Some anglers may not be aware of effective deep water release methods.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC work with the DNR to educate the public on Catch and Release to protect the high-quality Lake Trout fishing destination that is the legendary Stannard Rock fishery, and;
- MUCC encourage and support the DNR to conduct more frequent, regular biological assessments in addition to social science to better understand and quantify the attributes that make Stannard Rock a unique fishery on the Great Lakes, and;
- MUCC work with the DNR to study the effectiveness of deep water release methods to increase survivability over surface release and explore other methods of maintaining the Stannard Rock lake trout population dynamics. This might include defining baseline population metrics and establishing management criteria to maintain or improve on those metrics over time through available management tools, regulations, and angler behaviors, and;
- MUCC work with the DNR and NRC to create a zone and designation to recognize and protect the Stannard Rock fishery, potentially with different regulations informed by science, to protect its high-quality status against increasing angling exploitation, consistent with the management objectives established by the draft Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan 2023–2033.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC has no current policies on Stannard Rock. There have been a few policies over the decades supporting special angling opportunities/restrictions on specific bodies of water, usually trout streams.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- A special designation with its own regulations could protect a world class fishery.
- Research into deep water releases could protect species outside of this fishery.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Special regulations would be difficult to enforce due to the location of the fishery.
- Angler keep is already low due to the location of the fishery and the near requirement of hiring a charter captain.

DNR Response:

DNR Fisheries Division is neutral on the resolution. In general, the Department supports the overall recommendation of a more restrictive set of regulations, but the Department would like to see the specific aspects of a special regulatory framework for Stannard Rock lake trout get input from stakeholders and fisheries managers. Also, based on available resources, we cannot commit to added evaluation of the Stannard Rock lake trout population without additional funding or support.

Fisheries Committee:

Fisheries Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Fisheries Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #13
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: UP Whitetails of Marquette County, Region 1
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Include crop damage and DMAP take in harvest reporting

1. **WHEREAS:** with the implementation of the mandatory registration of whitetail deer harvested, a
2. much improved system of estimating our deer numbers and harvests are in place, and;
3. **WHEREAS:** the numbers of harvested whitetail deer reported in 2022 by the DNR do not paint
4. the total picture of animals harvested, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** Crop Damage permits, culls, tribal harvest, and Deer Management Assistance
6. Permits (DMAP) harvested animals are not included in the total deer numbers harvested. See
7. report summary below. www.mdnr-elicense.com/HarvestReportSummary, and;
8. **WHEREAS:** these crop damage and DMAP animals are harvested by landowners and
9. designated hunters and these programs are a management tool. The numbers should reflect on
10. the yearly harvest report totals for the entire state by each county, or deer management unit, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** as an example. In 2022, the DNR reported that in Menominee County there were
12. 3354 antlered and 2052 antlerless whitetail deer harvested. These numbers on the surface
13. show that hunters in Menominee County harvested substantially more antlered animals, and;
14. **WHEREAS:** if the crop damage (734) and DMAP (448) harvest numbers for 2022 in Menominee
15. County are added in, the totals would look like the following, 3354 antlered and 3234 antlerless,
16. and;
17. **WHEREAS:** the conclusion in 2022 by the DNR and posted for Menominee County show that ⅓
18. more antlered deer are being harvested than antlerless when in reality the numbers are almost
19. 50-50 antlered and antlerless, and;
20. **WHEREAS:** for some counties of the state, these crop damage and DMAP numbers are not as
21. significant. IE in Marquette County for 2022 there were 13 Crop Damage and DMAP antlerless
22. harvests. Other counties like Menominee and counties of lower Michigan will show significant
23. number changes, and;
24. **WHEREAS:** to fully understand and manage our whitetail deer the sportsmen and women of our
25. state needs to have the best information possible to better manage the resource, especially on
26. private lands, NOW;
27. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that the DNR, to better show the public a more detailed picture
28. of our whitetail deer harvests, add a column to the yearly harvest reports with Crop Damage,

29. culls, tribal harvest, and DMAP numbers listed, and use these numbers in the total yearly
30. harvests.

Proposed Resolution #13
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: UP Whitetails of Marquette County, Region 1
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Include crop damage and DMAP take in harvest reporting

Background/Problem:

Since the 2022 season Michigan's hunters have had to report their deer harvests within 72 hours of recovery. The results are posted in near real time on the DNR website. The data is broken down by county, season, weapon, date, etc.

The resolution would task MUCC with working with the DNR to add DMAP, crop damage harvests, and cull data to the tool.

Prior to the Conservation Policy Board, MUCC staff reached out to DNR Deer and Elk Specialist Chad Stewart. Per this communication almost everything in this resolution should be implemented sometime in 2024.

Resolution Content:

- The DNR, to better show the public a more detailed picture of our whitetail deer harvests, add a column to the yearly harvest reports with Crop Damage, culls, tribal harvest, and DMAP numbers listed, and use these numbers in the total yearly harvests.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- 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, town range and section where the successful hunt took place. The time allowed for reporting be changed to 72 hours after the harvest, or 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.
- Seek landowner permits or other means of increasing deer harvest in areas where surplus deer population has caused crop damage to private property.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Adding this data to the tool would provide more transparency and insight into the actual harvest of deer in the state.
- The DNR already has the data, it's simply putting it into the tool.
- They are planning on doing it already!

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Added burden on the department.

DNR Response:

The requirement to report deer taken on DMAP's was included originally in 2022. That requirement exists today, and each DMAP has a unique tag number so landowners/hunters can report their harvest. Beginning in 2024, the reporting system will have the capability to accept reports from out of season deer damage permits, as well as disease control permits. These options can be viewed within the list of "Hunting Seasons" on the Harvest Reporting website. This requirement has been communicated to staff, and they have been instructed to communicate these new requirements to permittees for 2024. We are also evaluating our public facing summary page and anticipate having more information available beginning this year. Targeted removal or "culls" are not included in the harvest reporting system because that data is not reflective of recreational hunting. Tribal harvest is not included on the DNR harvest reporting system because they are sovereign governments with independent harvest regulations.

Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #14
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Erik Schnelle, Michigan State Council – National Deer Association
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Support For Expansion of Venison Donation Programs

1. **WHEREAS:** Sportsmen and Sportswomen as well as non-hunters in the state of Michigan have
2. supported the Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger (MSAH) organization and its program since its
3. inception in 1991, and;
4. **WHEREAS:** the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) is one of the founding groups who
5. fostered the Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger organization and continues to be involved and
6. represented on the board of directors for the MSAH, and;
7. **WHEREAS:** the mission of the MSAH is to provide ground venison to state-recognized non-profit
8. food banks, shelters and pantries providing food assistance to the hungry of the state of Michigan
9. through donated deer from hunter and deer management programs and the processing of those
10. deer by MSAH participating processors, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** from 1991 to 2020 an estimated 831,519 pounds of ground venison has been
12. provided to Michigan-based non-profit food banks, shelters, and pantries to create up to
13. 3,326,076 hot and high in protein meals through the combined effort of the MSAH and the
14. Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), and;
15. **WHEREAS:** Michigan has a need to harvest more antlerless deer in many parts of the state yet
16. 75% of the state's hunters won't shoot an antlerless deer, only 17% of the state's hunters take
17. one antlerless deer and 8% of Michigan's hunters take more than one antlerless deer, and;
18. **WHEREAS:** Most hunters have a freezer and annual venison eating capacity, and;
19. **WHEREAS:** Hunter numbers have declined for over 20 years, and;
20. **WHEREAS:** Antlerless harvest has declined by about 28% over the last 20 years, and;
21. **WHEREAS:** The state's remaining hunters will need to harvest more antlerless deer than they
22. ever have to manage our deer herd at healthy levels, and;
23. **WHEREAS:** the wild game processors working with the MSAH are being paid at rates far below
24. current market rates, and;
25. **WHEREAS:** On September 14, 2023, the Michigan DNR mandated that all deer donated to
26. MSAH that were harvested from counties with known Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) or Chronic
27. Wasting disease (CWD) and found negative for those and that all venison donated in Michigan
28. must be tested for lead, and;

29. **WHEREAS:** Disease testing timeframes can vary from 2 to 6 or more weeks and most processors
30. do not have adequate freezer space to hold donated deer or venison while waiting, NOW;
31. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that MUCC work with the DNR and legislature to ensure that
32. MSAH, or any other state-sponsored venison donation program have the funds and policies
33. necessary to efficiently test and distribute venison to the states-hungry, to expand the program to
34. processors in every county in the state, to compensate processors for donated venison at
35. annually adjusted market rates, ensure that processors have adequate storage space for donated
36. venison while waiting for test results (in some cases this may mean providing seasonal
37. refrigerated trailers or freezers), and that they are compensated for the necessary additional
38. mandated lead, CWD and bTB testing work, and;
39. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** that MUCC continue to work for programs, which could include
40. license fee rebates, to encourage venison donations from hunters and donations from culling
41. Programs.

Proposed Resolution #14
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Erik Schnelle, Michigan State Council – National Deer Association
Passed: December 2, 2023 Conservation Policy Board Meeting
Title: Support For Expansion of Venison Donation Programs

Background/Problem:

In September of 2023 the DNR mandated that all meat in the MSAH program needed to be CWD tested and x-rayed for lead.

This mandate initially required that the deer not be processed until this testing was completed, and some processors were forced to throw out donated deer, refuse deer, and anecdotally drop from the program. This mandate for waiting to process was removed, but storage issues remained.

In late 2023 stakeholder groups like the National Deer Association (NDA) and MUCC made the ask to get funding into a supplemental budget for MSAH for the purchase of refrigerated trailers, higher pay for processors, and shipping for bTB testing.

MUCC was one of the founders of the MSAH program.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC work with the DNR and legislature to ensure that MSAH, or any other state-sponsored venison donation program have the funds and policies necessary to efficiently test and distribute venison to the states-hungry, to expand the program to processors in every county in the state, to compensate processors for donated venison at annually adjusted market rates, ensure that processors have adequate storage space for donated venison while waiting for test results, (in some cases this may mean providing seasonal refrigerated trailers or freezers), and that they are compensated for the necessary additional mandated lead, CWD and bTB testing work, and;
- MUCC continue to work for programs, which could include license fee rebates, to encourage venison donations from hunters and donations from culling programs.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC support legislation to create a state tax credit per each deer legally harvested during a hunting season by a hunter and donated to a charitable organization like the MSAH that is engaged in the distributing wild game processed at a Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) or United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspected and approved participating wild game processors in our state.
- MUCC will support legislation to also create a tax credit per each donated and legally harvested deer that is processed into ground venison burger by a processor to feed the state's hungry through working with a charitable organization like the MSAH that is engaged in the distributing wild game processed at an MDARD or USDA inspected wild game processor to feed the hungry of our state through the state of Michigan recognized non-profit food banks, shelters, and pantries.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- The program provides fresh venison to Michigan's hungry.
- A robust MSAH program provides an incentive for increased doe harvest so hunters do not need to process or keep the meat for themselves.
- MUCC should follow through on its founding of the program and ensure its success.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- State revenue is limited and the budget is expected to be largely flatline.

DNR Response:

The current Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger (MSAH) program operates in 23 Michigan Counties, <https://www.easymapmaker.com/map/de604eca7a80ab30e4665860e16f9d18> with a majority of the processors located in the southern half of the state, where a majority of the excess deer live. With only four processors north of Clare and only three in the Upper Peninsula, some expansion is needed based on deer numbers but to have MSAH processors in all 83 counties is not supported nor feasible with current funding.

Each year, the per pound rate has increased, \$1.75 in 2021/2022 to \$2.00 in 2023, the fee a processor receives today based on an average deer netting 40lbs of ground venison which is roughly \$80.00. It appears the average cost for basic deer processing in 2023 is \$100.00 +, so an increase in the per pound rate is warranted based on estimated market prices.

Freezer space can be an issue for some processors to hold venison while awaiting test results. The cost for a 6'x 12' refrigerated trailer is roughly \$35,000, the monthly cost to rent one is \$1,700. Some processors generate large amounts of venison others do not, we would need to identify which processors provide the most venison and determine needs on a case-by-case basis.

Today processors are being reimbursed \$20.00 to remove lymph nodes.

The Department is willing to explore some of the suggestions in this resolution.

Wildlife Committee

Propose the following amendment: Line 27 after (CWD) add "be tested"

Line 32 strike MSAH, or any other state-sponsored venison donation program have, replace with "the State of Michigan provide"

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee, with proposed amendment.
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #15
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Eric Braden, Executive Board
Passed: November 1, 2023 Executive Board Meeting
Title: MUCC Opposition to the Nyberg Amendment

1. **WHEREAS:** The Nyberg Steelhead Amendment – Presented during the October NRC Meeting
2. Amends proposed Fisheries order 200.23A, and;
3. **WHEREAS:** MUCC supports equal access and opportunity of take for all Sportsmen and
4. Sportswomen, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** MUCC Supports the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) management of
6. Michigan's Fisheries and Wildlife populations utilizing "Principles of sound scientific Management"
7. as noted in Public Act 377 of 1996 "Proposal G", and;
8. **WHEREAS:** MUCC Supports the 2014 Michigan Ballot Initiative (Scientific Fish and Wildlife
9. Conservation Act), where 374,000 sportsmen and sportswomen's signatures initiated an indirect
10. state statute. The initiative empowered the NRC to be the sole designator of game species and
11. gave exclusive authority to the NRC to regulate sportfishing, and;
12. **WHEREAS:** The "Michigan Steelhead Management – Large River Creel Surveys to inform status
13. of the fishery", presenters Seth Herbst and Jay Wesley NRC Fisheries Subcommittee Meeting
14. September 14, 2023, indicated that the steelhead management goal is to provide year-round
15. steelhead angling opportunities to diverse user groups with differing ability levels and preferred
16. fishing methods in Michigan Great Lakes and connected waters. The presentation also included
17. "Steelhead Regulatory Recommendations" to retain existing steelhead regulations, continue to
18. collect information and reassess as the 2027 regulatory sunset approaches as the perceived
19. benefit of the restricted seasonal harvest wouldn't be realized for several years. Additional
20. "Steelhead Regulatory recommendations" were made under the "Natural Steelhead – Summary of
21. Status" to Provide time to assess fishery dynamics as the Biological evidence does not indicate
22. changes are warranted, and;
23. **WHEREAS:** The proposed changes within the Nyberg Amendment would represent a restriction
24. of take mid-season creating confusion among anglers, NOW;
25. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** MUCC strongly opposes the proposed Nyberg Amendment
26. based upon information provided by MDNR Biologists, as outlined in the "Michigan Steelhead
27. Management – Large River Creel Surveys to inform Status of the fishery", Presenters Seth Herbst
28. and Jay Wesley NRC Fisheries Subcommittee Meeting September 14, 2023, and;

29. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the NRC work with the MDNR Biologist, State Universities,
30. Organizations and the many Citizens Fisheries Advisory Councils to provide and assess
31. information for the “Science-based” management of Michigan’s Fisheries.

Proposed Resolution #15
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Eric Braden, Executive Board
Passed: November 1, 2023 Executive Board Meeting
Title: MUCC Opposition to the Nyberg Amendment

Background/Problem:

This amendment to Fisheries Order 200.23A went through a few variations between its introduction and eventual unanimous passage at the November 2023 NRC meeting. This emergency resolution is official MUCC policy until the membership acts on it at the 2024 Annual Convention.

It was at MUCC staff's recommendation that the resolution was written very narrowly to oppose this specific amendment, believing that any larger policy discussion should go through MUCC's normal policy process.

FO 200.23A is now Fisheries Order 200.24, and was passed unanimously limiting steelhead take on a number of streams across the state, and removed the existing 2027 sunset from when commissioners last tackled the issue in 2021. MUCC testified in opposition to the amendment, based on the resolution and board direction. The new regulations take effect at the beginning of the new fishing season April 1, 2024.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC strongly opposes the proposed Nyberg Amendment based upon information provided by MDNR Biologists, as outlined in the "Michigan Steelhead Management – Large River Creel Surveys to inform Status of the fishery", Presenters Seth Herbst and Jay Wesley NRC Fisheries Subcommittee Meeting September 14, 2023, and;
- That the NRC work with the MDNR Biologist, State Universities, Organizations and the many Citizens Fisheries Advisory Councils to provide and assess information for the "Science-based" management of Michigan's Fisheries.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC had no policy on this prior to the emergency resolution. The executive board chose to stay out of the issue in 2021 when the first set of regulations was passed. The board felt it necessary to get involved in 2023 when the sunset from 2021 was going to be removed. The board also felt it important to limit the scope of the resolution on an issue this large since it could not go through normal policy process.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- The NRC's actions lacked biological justification.
- Any real or perceived problems with lake trout are unlikely to be caused by stream anglers.
- Most stream anglers, per DNR surveys, already practice catch and release.
- The regulation will dissuade anglers from traveling for steelhead fishing, when they otherwise would have.
- While it does restrict opportunity it is not a regulation that harms the resource.

- The new regulatory language poses problems at some fisheries where rainbow trout are present.
- A large-scale education effort will need to take place to ensure anglers are aware of the changes to regulation.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Steelhead populations are in decline, and we lack data to say where/why.
- Something needed to be done and this results in no biological harm.

DNR Response:

The Department is neutral on this resolution, as establishing fishing regulations is within NRC authority. DNR Fisheries Division is working on developing a Steelhead Task Force Group to address some items in the amendment and discuss the future of Steelhead fishing in Michigan.

Fisheries Committee:

Fisheries Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Fisheries Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #16
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: MHDF, MBHA, UPBHA, MSCHA, MSFHA
Passed: January 10, 2024 Executive Board Meeting
Title: Dog hunting quiet period

1. **WHEREAS:** currently in the Michigan Wildlife Conservation Order (WCO) there is no hunting
2. coyotes with the aid of dogs from April 16-July 7 (6.4(3)), and;
3. **WHEREAS:** this regulation exists to protect numerous game and nongame species including
4. migratory and ground-nesting birds, certain mammals, and hibernating species, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** oftentimes these species are most vulnerable coming out of the winter months, and;
6. **WHEREAS:** keeping hunting dogs out of the field during these times to protect these vulnerable
7. species is the responsibility of conservationists, NOW;
8. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** MUCC supports the quiet period from April 16-July 7 where no
9. hunting of coyotes with dogs is allowed.

Proposed Resolution #16
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: MHDF, MBHA, UPBHA, MSCHA, MSFHA
Passed: January 10, 2024 Executive Board Meeting
Title: Dog hunting quiet period

Background/Problem:

This resolution came on the heels of the year round coyote hunting resolution. At the wildlife committee meeting prior to the December policy board meeting the idea for an amendment with similar language to this came up, the committee preferred it be a separate resolution.

The resolution was then submitted for emergency consideration to the executive board and is now included in the convention agenda. This resolution is our interim policy until acted on by convention attendees.

Currently a quiet period where no coyote hunting with dogs exists in the Wildlife Conservation Order between April 16-July 7. The resolution would make it MUCC policy to support the continuation of that regulation based on the protection of vulnerable species during the spring and early summer months.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC supports the quiet period from April 16-July 7 where no hunting of coyotes with dogs is allowed.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- No policy currently exists addressing a coyote hunting with dogs quiet period.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- Protect hibernating species when they are at their most vulnerable.
- Protect ground nesting bird species.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- Coyotes need to be more aggressively managed in some areas.

DNR Response:

Currently, an individual may not hunt or train dogs on game, including coyote, from April 16th to July 7th. This “quiet period” is in place to protect wildlife from predation during the time when many species have dependent young. The Department intends to maintain this limitation to prohibit the use of dogs to hunt or train on coyotes during this time.

Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #17
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Steve Dey, Executive Board, George Lindquist, Executive Board, Gary Gorniak, CPB Region 2
Passed: January 10, 2024 Executive Board Meeting
Title: Support of the Sportsmen's Alliance Actions

1. **WHEREAS:** MUCC passed a resolution in 2019 supporting a Gray Wolf hunting and trapping
2. season across the entire Upper Peninsula and maintaining a population of 300-400 animals in the
3. U.P., and;
4. **WHEREAS:** the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation, together with the Michigan Bear Hunters
5. Association, Upper Peninsula Bear Houndsmen Association, and Wisconsin Bear Hunters
6. Association, filed a pair of petitions under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) with the U.S. Fish &
7. Wildlife Service (FWS) on gray wolves, and;
8. **WHEREAS:** one petition is to recognize and delist a Western Great Lakes Distinct Population
9. (WGL DPS) of wolves within Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin (and areas of adjoining states)
10. while, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** the other petition requests FWS to exercise specific management options on
12. remnant wolf populations existing outside of the WGL DPS and the Northern Rocky Mountain
13. Distinct Population Segment (NRM DPS) created by Congress in 2011, and;
14. **WHEREAS:** the WGL DPS petition points out wolf populations have far surpassed FWS recovery
15. goals in the WGL region, with the total population now exceeding 4,000 wolves. With estimates of
16. 2,700 wolves in Minnesota, 1,000 in Wisconsin, and more than 600 in Michigan, and;
17. **WHEREAS:** the original recovery goals for the species were 1,400 for Minnesota and a minimum
18. combined population of 100 wolves for Michigan and Wisconsin together, and;
19. **WHEREAS:** in all three states, fish and wildlife managers estimate that wolves occupy nearly all
20. suitable habitat throughout their range, NOW;
21. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** MUCC supports the Sportsman's Alliance Foundation in both
22. its petitions for Gray Wolf management.

Proposed Resolution #17
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Steve Dey, Executive Board, George Lindquist, Executive Board, Gary Gorniak, CPB Region 2
Proposed: January 10, 2024 Executive Board Meeting
Title: Support of the Sportsmen's Alliance Actions

Background/Problem:

In November of 2023 the Sportsman's Alliance filed an intent to sue the US Fish and Wildlife Service over wolf delisting in an effort to end the merry-go-round of listing and delisting.

The resolution calls for MUCC to publicly support the lawsuit, and the efforts of the Sportsman's Alliance.

This resolution **DOES NOT** constitute an agreement by MUCC to participate in the lawsuit.

MUCC's Executive Board is the only entity that may engage in legal action on behalf of MUCC and its members.

Resolution Content:

- MUCC supports the Sportsman's Alliance Foundation in both its petitions for Gray Wolf management.

MUCC Current & Past Policy Standings:

- MUCC does not have a policy as it relates to this specific lawsuit, but has and will continue to seek a durable delisting of wolves in Michigan, as well as a modernization of the Endangered Species Act.
- MUCC supports a UP-wide wolf hunting and trapping season.

Arguments in Support of Resolution:

- The lawsuit could be the best way to ensure a durable delisting.
- Congressional action is extremely unlikely.

Arguments in Opposition to the Resolution:

- A meaningless gesture of support will not gain anything.
- This is not intervening in the lawsuit and unlikely to move the needle.

DNR Response:

The Michigan DNR is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the State's natural resources for current and future generations. Since wolves have become re-established in Michigan, they have once again become an integral part of the natural resources of the State and are a component of naturally functioning Michigan ecosystems. The Department supports the delisting of gray wolves in our state because the wolf population has fully recovered, and because

Michigan has a plan in place that will guide wolf management.

If wolves are delisted, then state management authority will be restored, and the Wolf Management Advisory Council will be reconvened. We expect that many of the items you have proposed will be up for discussion. Proposals regarding the hunting or trapping of wolves would be subject to the open process whereby any recommended regulatory changes are reviewed during Natural Resources Commission public sessions and subject to the provisions of the Open Meetings Act.

In compliance with the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, Section 43540e(8), the Wolf Management Advisory Council (Council) is required to provide an annual report to both the Legislature and the Natural Resources Commission on recommendations concerning wolf management in Michigan. The Council must be comprised of at least one member each representing:

- The Department of Natural Resources
- An organization that promotes conservation in Michigan
- An organization that promotes hunting or fishing in Michigan
- A Tribal government
- Agricultural interests
- An animal advocacy organization

Wildlife Committee:

Wildlife Committee supports as written.

Position:

- SUPPORT: Wildlife Committee
- OPPOSITION:
- NEUTRAL:

Proposed Resolution #18
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: MUCC Fisheries Committee
Passed: February 7, 2024 Executive Board Meeting
Title: Additional Trolling Rods Proposal

1. **WHEREAS:** The Great Lakes Salmon Initiative (GLSI) has submitted to the MDNR and
2. Michigan fishing organizations a proposal to solicit input related to offering an additional trolling
3. license to run an additional three rods, and;
4. **WHEREAS:** The GLSI proposal is promoting this to help all anglers be more successful trolling
5. our Great Lakes. This would apply only to boats trolling for salmon, trout and walleye on the
6. Great lakes and connecting waterways, and;
7. **WHEREAS:** The additional three rod license would not apply to pier or shore anglers, or apply
8. to other species like Perch, Bass or Pike, and;
9. **WHEREAS:** The GLSI believes this additional license could raise revenue for the MDNR to
10. apply to enhance Great Lakes fisheries issues such as cormorant control, and;
11. **WHEREAS:** The GLSI has indicated in provided information of support that this proposal of an
12. additional three rods will not hurt our salmon and trout fishery. The fisheries are protected by
13. creel limits and as the MDNR has agreed to let the Tribal fisheries use more efficient Gill nets
14. under the premise that it will not hurt the resource due to quotas on the total allowable catch for
15. the fish that they are targeting. More efficient trolling spreads are therefore seen the same way.
16. The quotas will protect the resource, and;
17. **WHEREAS:** MUCC supports all fair chase and ethical methods of take currently written into
18. Michigan fishing regulations that apply to the general sportsman, and;
19. **WHEREAS:** MUCC supports the present three rod fishing regulation applicable to all anglers in
20. Michigan, NOW;
21. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** Michigan United Conservation Club opposes the proposal for
22. a license to allow an additional three trolling rods based on:
23. A) This proposal is viewed as preferential treatment for only one group of anglers,
24. experience within the committee has indicated that additional rods with a minimal inexperienced
25. crew would only create an unsafe operation of the boat and related gear when handling multiple
26. hook ups in congested high density trolling areas,
27. B) The committee believes the method of take is an important management tool and additional
28. rods would only lead to a reduction in the allowable daily creel,

- 29. C) The committee believes that a verification of impact to the fishery as relates to the 2023
- 30. consent decree reintroduction of tribal gill nets needs to be understood before making
- 31. additional changes to method of take to minimize impact upon the fishery,
- 32. D) The committee believes the cost to implement this proposal for an additional three rods
- 33. would be more than the perceived funding generated as there is no data available to date to
- 34. support the GLSI suggested benefit.

Proposed Resolution #19
Requires Simple Majority

Submitted by: Education Committee, Dawn Levey, Executive Board, Len Shaner,
 Executive Board
Passed: February 7, 2024 Executive Board Meeting
Title: Use of Social Media by Members

1. **WHEREAS:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) sets the standard for conservation in
2. the State of Michigan, and;
3. **WHEREAS:** MUCC promotes safe shooting sports, ethical and humane harvesting practices
4. including but not limited to hunting, fishing, and trapping, and;
5. **WHEREAS:** It is paramount that MUCC members, affiliates and clubs publicly display said
6. practices in an ethical and humane manner which includes – news media and social media in
7. whatever means is trending, NOW;
8. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** Michigan United Conservation Clubs educate members,
9. affiliates, and club members on the implications of posting perceived offensive photographs and
10. materials that may offend the general public and would give reasons for organizations like the
11. Humane Society of the United States to use them against gun owners, hunters, anglers and
12. trappers, and;
13. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** MUCC work with and encourage individuals and other
14. conservation organizations and hunting, fishing, trapping, shooting sport groups to also refrain
15. from publicizing perceived offensive photographs or information.