

DNR eDigest

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The Bureau of Education and Information's goal is to publish "The E-Digest" bi-weekly on paydays. The bureau will publish additional issues, as needed. Contact "E-Digest" editor Diane.Brinson@wisconsin.gov or at 608/266-5215 to submit stories, story ideas and photos that communicate internally the department's work, policies and issues that matter to DNR employees.

December 17, 2009

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DNR's web delivery improvements represent positive change

Those of you who've used the popular Google and Yahoo search engines will recognize the approach DNR is undertaking to better deliver information to the public. New search capabilities and improved site navigation will make it easier and faster for DNR's customers to access the information they seek.

Once on the [department's home page](#), the customer merely will search on a keyword or subject to get to the information they need, rather than first determining where in the organization that information is located.

"DNR's website is transforming from an organizational structure to one that is topic driven," said Web Business and Technical Project manager **John Bushman** in the Bureau of Technology Services. "Rather than forcing our customers to know what division maintains certain information, they'll be able to find the information through categories and topics. The main categories will be: Outdoors and Nature; Business and Government; and Environment and Health."

For example, a customer no longer will have to figure out whether to go to the Bureau of Law Enforcement, the Bureau of Customer Service and Licensing or the Bureau of Parks to find snowmobile rules and trails. They'll just type in a topic such as "snowmobile," and simple navigation will get them to the specific information needed.

Solutions to website problems readily available

Margie Damgaard, web coordinator for the Division of Water and former Web Design Project co-manager with Bushman, noted that for every problem the redesign team addressed, there was a solution. For example:

- **Problem:** We're not satisfied with DNR's website. Customers can't easily find what they need. **Solution:** Improved site searches through Google Search tool.

- **Problem:** DNR needs to communicate via web, rather than in person or on paper, to save time/money and provide consistent service. **Solution:** GovDelivery will facilitate efficient DNR-to-citizen communication via this automated email and digital subscription management system. Read more about this outreach tool in the March 12, 2009 "Digest" story ["GovDelivery@ allows public to subscribe to information service."](#)

- **Problem:** The Internet should become DNR's platform for permitting, customer-driven information and listening to our

customers. **Solution:** Social networking tools, e.g. blogs, "FaceBook," etc,

Web coordinators to help programs manage their presence on the Internet

Helping to lead the way to an improved website are the recently-announced web coordinators for the divisions. The ["2009 Web Redesign Project"](#) Intranet page contains the names of the coordinators, their responsibilities and the latest on project work.

Among their duties, each division coordinator is charged with identifying and removing redundant and outdated information from their program's current website. Working with their division, the coordinator will identify existing content that relates to the initial topic listings. Some of the topics identified will be those their program is mandated to provide the public. A good example is information on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

In a nutshell, the coordinators will be business advocates for their divisions' web presence. You'll find their names on the ["Division Web Coordinators"](#) page in the "Web Toolkit."

"This talented group of coordinators will help lead the move to a dynamic, topic-driven website," said Bushman. "Once this group is fully established, web coordinators will act as the first point of contact for division-specific web requests."

DNR employees learning to use new tools

"The department even has its first blog, in the Division of Water," recently reported Division of Customer and Employee Service administrator **Vance Rayburn**. "We have tight controls on this. It's really a test activity for us, but it's a new technological experience for the agency."

A subsequent "DNR Digest" story will explain in greater detail the milestone recently reached with blogging, a major outreach improvement for the department. As an example, the new ["Lakes-L Blog Lakes List"](#) two-way communication tool replaces the previous Lakes-L listserv.

Watch for more to come on web redesign

In upcoming issues of the "DNR Digest," you'll read about the results of a useability study in the works. The purpose of this study is to validate design features, navigation and the phraseology used throughout the site. Staff as well as the public will be able to take advantage of an online survey to provide feedback on the redesign.

The department also will re-launch its homepage for public access at the end of January 2010. Watch for updates and status reports on the project Intranet page.



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Young disabled hunters enjoy the out-of-doors at Hartman Creek

Hartman Creek State Park hosted this year's deer hunt for disabled hunters over the December 4-6 weekend. Although no deer were taken, conservation warden **Ted Dremel**, Waupaca, labeled the event a success.

"Another safe and successful disabled Learn to Hunt Program has come and gone at Hartman Creek. Over the three years since this hunt began, only one deer was shot during the first hunt," said Dremel. "The hunters' excitement and satisfaction testify to the value of the experience, beyond bringing home a deer."

Three young men participated in this year's hunt, all mentored by their fathers. They hunted from ground blinds strategically placed in "morning" and "evening" locations. In Dremel's opinion, keeping the hunting party to three helps assure a quality event.



The hunting party of the 2009 Hartman Creek State Park disabled hunt (left to right): Craig Duffeck stands in front of his father, Chuck; Bob Beder stands behind his son, Joshua; and the tallest member of the party, Grant Huebner stands next to his father, Roland.

WDNR Photo

Amongst them, they sighted a total of 30 deer and fired six shots. Unfortunately, a search of the area revealed that none of the shots found their mark, reported Dremel. The weather was more cooperative this year, with temperatures ranging between 18 degrees in the morning to about 30 degrees in the evening. Even the wind cooperated by blowing in "the right direction" for both the morning and evening hunt locations.

The location of the hunt was in the closed hunting area of the park. It's in this area where the highest number of deer are found. Local hunters lend the blinds and any needed equipment to the park for this Learn to Hunt outing.

Dremel added that this was the first such hunt where all of the hunters and all of the mentors were graduates of a Hunter Safety Course.

Hunters ranged in age from 12 to 26 years

"Each hunt is different, based on the disabilities of the hunters," said Dremel. "In order to assure that each hunter can participate to their fullest ability, I want to see and talk to them beforehand so I place each one in the best location for them."

The youngest of the new hunters was 12 year-old Craig Duffeck, Neenah, who needed to be carried into the woods. Although he was the one hunter out of the group who wasn't able to shoot at a deer with his crossbow, Duffeck felt good about the hunt because he was able to see his first wild deer. He told Dremel that the nub buck looked "hairier than I thought."

With the assistance of his father, Joshua Beder, age 24 of Stevens Point, was able to get off two shots from his 20 gauge shotgun. Although he'd hunted with his dad before, he'd never had a chance to fire his gun. The young man enjoys outdoor activities, including camping, fishing and cutting wood with his family.

The oldest of the threesome was Grant Huebner, 26, from Nekoosa. According to his father, Huebner hadn't shown an interest in hunting until last year. This year, he was able to shoot his 12-gauge shotgun twice at a 4-point buck, but missed his target. In addition to his new interest in deer hunting, this young man also enjoys being outdoors, even remembering camping at Hartman Creek with his Boy Scout troop, years before. He'll soon join his brothers and father for more hunting. "It's always difficult to find disabled hunters for this hunt," explained Dremel. "I ask that others with DNR keep their eyes and ears open for potential hunters for next year."

Recognition for all who worked the hunt and behind the scenes

Although you wouldn't think that there's a lot involved in a hunt of just three hunters and their mentors, Dremel recognized several DNR employees and a local resident who made the experience the success that it was. For his part, Dremel plans and organizes the hunt, as well as providing free hunting licenses.

In addition to the hunter safety instruction Dremel provided, wildlife biologist **Steve Hoffman** helped kick off the weekend with a program on deer and habitat. **Lucas Schmidt**, in addition to being a forest ranger, is a local deer hunting expert who provided advice on placement of the deer blinds. Park superintendent **Mike Bergum** let visitors know about the special hunt and waived park admission for the hunters and their mentors.

Sue McElrone, a park ranger, made signs and maps for the hunters. Another park ranger, **Tony Austin**, who also attends UW-Stevens Point, made a pot of chili to warm up those who had trekked into the woods to set up the blinds. Local sportsman Brian Cullen every year has donates his equipment, time and expertise to the success of the hunt.

"With everyone's help, this year's hunt was the smoothest one, yet," according to Dremel. We didn't hit a single 'speed bump'."



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Secretary addresses legislators on deer season & population rule

Presented before Assembly Fish & Wildlife Committee and Senate Transportation, Tourism, Forestry & Natural Resources Committee, December 17, 2009

Good morning Chairs Hrachuck and Holperin and members of the Committees. I'm pleased to be here today to share with you a brief snapshot of Wisconsin's 158th deer hunt before we address the proposed deer management unit population goals for the next three years. The annual deer report is normally first delivered to the Natural Resources Board at its December meeting which this year was canceled due to a pretty good Wisconsin snowstorm. A copy of the report has been provided to the Board and has been provided to you as well.

I was out at deer registration stations on opening weekend and also got away a couple of days to hunt myself. Since the season closed we have heard from a lot of hunters who were frustrated with the hunt. We intend to be responsive to those concerns, but I would first like to make some general observations.



Interest in deer hunting in Wisconsin is as high today as it has been for decades.

WDNR Photo

The Wisconsin hunting heritage is a powerful force in our state; for families, for hunters, our economy and our quality of life.

Consider these facts from the current season:

- The hunting tradition is strong and vibrant in Wisconsin. We have some of the best deer hunting opportunities in the nation. For the 2009 deer hunt season to date, we sold 638,040 gun licenses and 204,833 bow licenses. These figures are just slightly below the numbers for last season. While 94 percent of hunters were Wisconsin residents, hunters from all 50 states once again came to hunt in Wisconsin this year.
- Overall, the 2009 nine-day gun hunt was the fourth safest on record with no fatalities. There were seven nonfatal incidents.
- More than 10,000 10- and 11-year olds tried out deer hunting on the state's new mentored hunting licenses. I thank the Chairs, the members of these committees, and the legislature for passing the mentored hunting bill in this past year. Of the new youth, 20% were girls. There was not a single hunting incident involving these hunters.
- The October Youth hunt harvest increased by 50% to more than 6,000 deer on the youth hunt weekend.
- Wisconsin annually ranks nationally in the top 5 states in the number of deer hunting licenses sold. And we are in the top 3 in total expenditures for hunting. Deer hunting is a \$1 billion driver of our state economy. We are one of the top 3 states in the nation for Boone and Crockett trophy whitetails, including a new state record buck taken by bow and arrow this fall. While our hunting tradition is something we are both proud of and thankful for, of all the work done by the DNR, there is probably no subject that generates more controversy or criticism than deer herd management. That was true 50 years ago when the old Conservation Department was in charge, and it will probably be true 50 years from today. People are passionate about their opinions. Our challenge is to have a good system in place for public input, and to make the best science based decisions we can on how we manage the herd.

As we do so, a good dose of humility is always in order. White-tail deer have lived on Wisconsin's vast and varied landscape for thousands of years, long before any immigrants arrived. Understanding deer and how they interact with their ecosystem is a significant challenge. The ecosystem is constantly changing, and our understanding of the system is always evolving. For example, one of the areas we are focused on is the impact of natural predators in the ecosystem—wolves, bears and coyotes. We are taking steps to improve the S-A-K population estimate model. And, we are laying the groundwork to do significant research on the impact of deer browse on forest regeneration.

Our 2009 pre-season forecast anticipated a lower harvest primarily due to an expected reduction in antlerless harvest. This reduction was a response to population declines in the last two years which were a result of herd reductions efforts as well as below average fawn production. Statewide **preliminary** registration figures indicate the harvest during the 9-day gun season was down 29% from 2008 to 196,098. This includes 86,708 antlered bucks -- a 12% decrease -- and 109,390 antlerless deer -- a 39% decrease from 2008.

We know that the herd is smaller in some regions of the state which is why we took action to reduce the harvest in those areas. During this season, 13 deer management units had no bonus antlerless permits. 38 units were moved out herd control to regular season, and 29 units were moved out of earn-a-buck, all contributing to a decline in antlerless harvest. In all, the number of regular units increased from 21 in 2008 to 59 in 2009.

Following the 2008 season, hunters told us they wanted fewer antlerless deer harvested. As a result, we greatly reduced the number of antlerless permits available and antlerless harvest went down accordingly. In 2009 there were 78 units (of 132 statewide) where we reduced antlerless deer hunting opportunity. This reduction in permits contributed to the decline in gun deer harvest.

In some areas of the state the deer population is below goal, and our efforts are focused on increasing the population. In other parts of the state, we are still above goal. For example, in the CWD zone in the southern part of the state, over-population has been a contributing factor to the increased prevalence of CWD in the deer herd, increasing the risk of spread of this disease.

Overall, fewer deer on the landscape equals fewer deer seen and fewer harvested. We must continue to manage toward a sustainable, healthy deer population.

Wisconsin's experience in 2009 is not unique. Our neighboring Great Lakes states and provinces also experienced harvest declines. Deer harvest is down 12% in Minnesota, 10-20% in Michigan, 20-30% in the UP, and 24% in Quebec.

Over the next few months, our staff will look carefully at the data hunters provided us on their registration stubs -- data that is the foundation of our science-based management -- to determine where we now stand with respect to the size of the deer population. We know the state's herd varies by region and careful analysis is needed before we move ahead with future season recommendations.

We also will continue to seek input from the public on deer management objectives and policy. In addition to advisory groups, public meetings and hearings, hunters can now give us feedback through a modified deer registration stub and an online database where hunters can record field observations of weather conditions, hours hunted and number of deer seen.

Deer management units and population goals



Deer population goals will guide management of the deer herd for the next three years.

WDNR Photo

This brings us to deer population goals and Deer Management Unit boundaries. The department remains committed to supporting Wisconsin's hunting traditions and managing for a healthy, sustainable and ecologically balanced deer population. In the early part of this decade, the deer population reached unsustainable levels in much of the state. It's the department's job to bring populations down to the population goals approved through an extensive public process with

ultimate review by the legislature. It is also our job to use deer management tools to raise the deer population in regions where it is below goal.

The criteria we must follow to determine deer population goals come from laws passed by the legislature. These laws require the Department to manage the deer population for conservation of ecosystems and for future generations' use and enjoyment. They require the Department to keep agricultural and forestry damage to tolerable levels. Our administrative code further emphasizes the balance that deer goals must strike: NR 1.15 directs that the "department shall seek to maintain a deer herd in balance with its range and at deer population goals reasonably compatible with social, economic and ecosystem objectives for each deer management unit."

Unit boundaries and population goals are reviewed at approximately three year intervals. In 2005, this committee reviewed and approved the goals that are now in place. Today you are reviewing Natural Resources Board changes approved in October that will guide our herd management decisions for the next three years. As we have done before, we once again welcome input from your committees before these goals are finalized.

The changes before you were developed with extensive public involvement. Beginning in January 2009, a large stakeholder group made up of representatives of hunting groups, landowners, foresters, farmers and ecologists convened to lead this goal review. I would like to extend our gratitude to these hard working volunteers who take deer management very seriously.

The process for this goal review included the stakeholder panel, 40 public meetings to gather input, several web based surveys, eight public hearings across the state to review this rule, as well as Natural Resource Board review and approval. There are many factors to consider when establishing deer goals -- preserving Wisconsin's great deer hunting tradition for future generations, forest impacts, agricultural impacts, public safety as measured by car-deer collisions, preventing animal disease transmission, and others.

Wisconsin's 16 million acres of forest land support great deer habitat as well other important economic and environmental values. When the deer population is too high the regeneration of our forests is put at risk, threatening deer habitat and future deer hunting opportunities as well as our forestry based economy. Wisconsin's paper and wood products industry is #1 in the country. Our forests are a tremendous natural resource that provide the foundation for 68,000 family-supporting jobs. Forestry related companies are the #1 employer in 23 Wisconsin counties.

Deer also impact another vitally important sector of Wisconsin's economy, agriculture. The year 2000 was a peak year in Wisconsin's deer hunt- over 615,000 deer were harvested. As we have moved closer to deer population goals over the last few years, agriculture impacts have been reduced. In 2000, over 15,000 acres were damaged by deer and 333,000 bushels of corn lost, as well as 70,000 bushels of soybeans lost. By comparison, in 2008, a little over 8,000 acres were damaged by deer, 172,000 bushels of corn lost, and 30,000 bushels of soybeans lost.

Public safety is another factor that the Department must consider in setting deer population goals. While most Wisconsin citizens expect that car-deer collisions are a part of living in Wisconsin, they expect the DNR to keep these collisions in an acceptable range. As we have moved closer to deer population goals over the past decade, the number of deer caused collisions have declined. DNR numbers for deer carcass removals from our highways declined from 48,000 in 2003 to 28,000 in 2008. The number of car-deer collisions reported by police to DOT declined from over 20,000 in 2000, to just over 15,800 in 2008.

These numbers are not just statistics. 10 people died on our highways last year from car/deer collisions. In the 1990's, the trend was better, with fatalities from car-deer crashed averaging just over 5 per year, compared with 10 per year since 2000.

Disease management also remains a key concern. Chronic Wasting Disease poses a serious threat to a healthy, sustainable deer herd and our hunting heritage. Population goals inside and outside the CWD zone need to reflect our strongest efforts to slow disease spread.

Balancing all of these goals is a challenging task. Our responsibility is to establish goals that will sustain our great hunting heritage, result in a healthy deer population that is sustainable on our landscape, and consider the impacts deer have on all facets of life in Wisconsin. The rule before you today follows the recommendations of the stakeholder group, with extensive public input. These rules represent our best efforts to strike an acceptable balance that will ensure ecosystem conservation and sustain our hunting heritage for generations to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. We look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Editor's Note: *Text of Sec. Frank's testimony also will be posted in the "Secretary's Corner."*



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2009 "Partners in Giving" brings in more than \$102,600

November 27 marked the conclusion of this year's "Partners in Giving" campaign. Between pledges and fund raising events, DNR's final deposits totaled \$21,687, including an additional \$44 from the Bureau of Finance's silent auction. The cumulative total for the campaign stands at \$102,689, as pledge forms continue to come in. The organizers of "Partners in Giving" won't turn anyone away.

The following winners drew the final items of the campaign:

- **Jim Federhart**, Bureau of Human Resources, selected a hat from the Nature Conservancy.
- **Robert Strous**, Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment, chose a set of four tickets to the February 28 UW Women vs. Iowa basketball game donated by the UW.
- **Wendy McCown**, Bureau of Forestry Business Services, walked away with homemade baked goods donated by **Michelle Olson** in the Office of the Secretary.
- **Joanne Haas**, Office of Communication, also decided on a set of four tickets to the February 28 UW women's basketball game.
- **Colleen Robinson Klug**, Bureau of Forest Management selected the three-piece Avon jewelry ensemble donated by **Cheryl Krull**, Bureau of Finance.

Winners from the previous week selected their prizes:

- **Sue Eley**, Bureau of Legal Services, chose the jar of honey donated by **Karl Martin**, Bureau of Wildlife and Forestry Research.
- **Jim Baumann**, Bureau of Watershed Management, took home the "Connectivity for Wildlife" t-shirt donated by **Cameron Bump**, Office of Energy.
- **Richard Lathrop**, Bureau of Science Services, also selected four tickets to the February 28 UW women's basketball game.



Chili Cookoff sponsor Laurel Steffes (left) presented the "Most Outrageous & Self-promoting Chef Award" to Diane Brookbank at the Chili Cookoff fundraiser.

WDNR Photo

To our colleagues in Fitchburg, regional Human Resources manager **Deb Kundert** wrote:

"A big 'Thank You' to everyone that made our 2009 'Partners in Giving' campaign a success! This year, the region collected \$11,956 in pledges. We had a couple of events that helped us reach our total: members of the 15,000 Bike/Walk Challenge used the 'Partners in Giving' campaign pledges as a way to donate towards the Second Harvest Food Pantry, and the cookout also raised money towards the campaign. Great prizes were offered by members of the regional management team, also an annual event. In the last week of the campaign, we raised \$2,459 in pledges; a lot of employees were waiting for the shawl drawing. **Bill Zwolanek**, Bureau of Customer Service and Licensing, was the lucky winner of the beautiful shawl, knitted and donated by **Eileen Pierce**, Division of Air and Waste."

"I want to extend a personal thank you to **Mary Brown** and **Linda Pederson**, both with the Office of the Secretary, for their work in managing this year's campaign," said 2009 campaign chair **Paul Delong**. "Mary and Linda did a lot of work behind the scenes to make this campaign a success."

"Finally, my thanks to all who volunteered and donated prizes. Their contributions did make a difference," said Delong.

- **Todd Ambs**, Division of Water
- **Noah Balgooyen**, Bureau of Wildlife Management
- **Suzanne Bangert**, Division of Air and Waste
- **Julie Brunette**, Bureau of Finance

- **Cameron Bump**, Office of Energy
- **Terri Burns**, Bureau of Finance
- **David Carper**, Bureau of Air Management
- **Megan Correll**, Bureau of Legal Services
- **Ron Daggett**, Bureau of Air Management
- **Tom Eggert**, Bureau of Cooperative Environmental Assistance
- **Diane Galbraith**, Bureau of Science Services
- **Lindsey Gieck**, Bureau of Waste & Materials Management
- **Peggy Gray**, Bureau of Enforcement
- **Helen Hartman**, Bureau of Wildlife Management
- **Mark Hetzel**, Bureau of Finance
- **Margaret Hooper-Lofton**, Bureau of Finance
- **Tom Joestgen**, Safety and Risk Management Section
- **Randy Jurewicz**, Bureau of Endangered Resources
- **John Kallas**, Bureau of Finance
- **Cheryl Krull**, Bureau of Finance
- **Hank Kuehling**, Bureau of Remediation & Redevelopment
- **Debra Kundert**, Bureau of Human Resources
- **Dorothy La Mar**, Bureau of Finance
- **Karl Martin**, Bureau of Science Services
- **James McLimans**, Bureau of Drinking Water & Groundwater
- **Sue Meyer**, Bureau of Customer Service & Licensing
- **Linda Morgan**, Bureau of Technology Services
- **Woody Myers**, Bureau of Air Management
- **Linda Netzer**, Bureau of Parks & Recreation
- **Robin Nyfdeler**, Bureau of Legal Services
- **Greg Pils**, Bureau of Science Services
- **Winston Piotrkowski**, Bureau of Customer Service & Licensing
- **Vance Rayburn**, Division of Customer & Employee Services
- **Sharon Reeve**, Bureau of Air Management
- **Mike Schmoller**, Bureau of Remediation & Redevelopment
- **Paula Schumann**, Bureau of Finance
- **Connie Scott**, Bureau of Facilities & Lands
- **Debra Smith**, Bureau of Wildlife Management
- **Barb Sosinsky**, Bureau of Watershed Management
- **Laurel Steffes**, Office of Communication
- **Barbara Swenson**, Bureau of Air Management
- **Mary Rose Teves**, Bureau of Community Financial Assistance
- **Karen Trow**, Bureau of Human Resources
- **Melanie Vukasovic**, Bureau of Forestry Services
- **Sherri Voigt**, Bureau of Finance
- **Mary Weaver**, Bureau of Finance
- **Phyllis Ziehr**, Bureau of Drinking & Groundwater
- **Bonnie Zitske**, Bureau of Fisheries Management

Annual Chili Cookoff big help to Goodman Center Food Pantry

“What a wonderful event we had! And, it’s all because of the chili chefs, bakers and chili staff,” said cookoff sponsor **Laurel Steffes**, Office of Communication. “More than 150 dined on chili, and I loved hearing that people really had fun.”

Crowd voted on top chefs in four categories, and the winners were...

- Most outrageous chef: **Diane Brookbank**, Bureau of Customer Service & Licensing
- Non-traditional chili: Diane Brookbank, again!
- Critter chili: **Larry Sperling**, Bureau of Customer Service & Licensing
- Traditional chili: **Karl Brooks**, Bureau of Law Enforcement

When Bureau of Law Enforcement's Bill Engfer and Dave Woodbury and Steffes hatched the idea while returning from a federal disaster drill, they couldn't have anticipated the outpouring of enthusiasm.



(Left) Chef Dave Woodbury, Bureau of Law Enforcement, served his homemade chili to David Argall from the Bureau of Customer Service & Licensing.

WDNR Photo

The Goodman Center Food Pantry picked up seven boxes loaded with food. The pantry manager reported that their shelves were empty after Thanksgiving.

"I had the honor of bringing a certified check for \$1,032.16 over to the pantry," said Steffes. It bought a lot of food for the upcoming holidays. They were absolutely blown away to hear how much money we raised." Steffes added that the cookoff will be featured in Madison's "East Side News."

"From the volunteer bakers, to our fantastic promotion person Sue Meyer, to all of the chefs, thanks from the bottom of my heart. It really is an honor to be part of DNR and a colleague of you all," said Steffes. "And, we'll do it all over, next year."

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Forest Service honors tribal youth for work on DNR and other lands

By: Jim Bishop, Northern Region

The U.S. Forest Service on December 10 honored a team of Lac Courte Oreilles tribal youth for their role in a number of conservation projects. The LCO Tribal Youth Corps received the Service's Eastern Region Honor Award.

The LCO tribe organized the six-member crew with assistance from the local community college, the Forest Service and the Department of Natural Resources. **Neal Kephart**, manager of the Chippewa Flowage, coordinated department projects with the group and was on hand at the awards ceremony.



LCO tribal youth along with DNR fisheries technician, (center) Russ Warwick, Hayward, shocked a trout stream during a fish survey in Sawyer County. The youth were part of a summer-long work program that earned them a special award from the U.S. Forest Service.

WDNR Photo

"Northern Region director **John Gozdziwski** worked with the Forest Service and the tribe to help get things organized and we took it from there," said Kephart. "It has been a pleasure to have the youth and the work they did was greatly

appreciated.”

Along with Kephart at the awards program were Mic Isham, the LCO Conservation chief and Deb Proctor, the Forest Service's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) coordinator. Isham explained that LCO Conservation joined with DNR to create the youth corps because both the Wisconsin Conservation Corps and the state's Youth Conservation Corps were disbanded in the 1990s. “No one could do it alone because of budgets, so we made a partnership,” said Isham.

During the summer of 2009, the crew constructed trails, built and restored campgrounds on the Chippewa Flowage; did shoreline erosion control work; monitored elk calving; pruned trees; did fish surveys; built fish cribs; created in-stream trout habitat; and eradicated invasive species. Most of the work was done in Sawyer County. The youth also attended the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission's 25th anniversary celebration.

On behalf of the team, Jade Carrasco, LCO Community College intern, accepted the award for the crew. She was also honored for her leadership and working with the agencies' project leaders in educating crew members about their work assignments.

Footnote: *Jim Bishop is the public affairs manager for the Northern Region.*



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Mallard #1657-24726 ends four year journey in a far away land

On November 13, DNR research scientist **Rich Kahl**, Madison, received a somewhat unusual email. A biologist and data manager at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland wrote to let him know that a hunter had shot mallard duck 1657-24726. In and of itself, not a particularly unusual report. The fact that the bird had made it all the way to Iceland before its journey ended was unusual.

“This was an extraordinary band recovery from the Bird Banding Lab in Maryland,” said Kahl. This was a female mallard hatched in the spring of 2006 and banded at Collin's Marsh Wildlife Area, Manitowoc County, on August 31, 2006.”

Tongue-in-cheek, Kahl asked wildlife biologist **Aaron Buchholz**, Mishicot, how badly he'd abused his banded birds that one would flee all the way to Iceland?



Michele Woodford, Eau Claire and Rhinelander, gently banded this mallard.

WDNR Photo

Kent Van Horn, migratory game bird ecologist in the Bureau of Wildlife Management, explained that all migratory bird banding is directed by the US and Canadian Wildlife Services in a cooperative effort for North America. The Bird Banding Lab within the US Geological Service (USGS) is the research branch that organizes the band inventories and distributions, as well as managing the band recovery data base.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) determines many of the banding protocols and banding quotas for different

parts of the continent, so that a good sample of birds is banded. Each state and province works cooperatively with this program by banding waterfowl within their jurisdiction according to these federally determined needs. Although normally just recorded in a report, the USGS biologist wanted to assure that this entry wasn't overlooked. It was only the second mallard banded in North America and recovered by a hunter in Iceland. It also was only the third mallard recovered in Europe.

"The bird's movement also is basically off the chart of anticipated movement for the species based on all former mallard recoveries," reported the USGS biologist.

Wisconsin's role in North American banding

Van Horn explained that the primary purpose of waterfowl banding is to collect data on survival of the ducks and rate of harvest, so that every agency involved can use this information to measure the impact of hunting. "We adjust hunting season lengths and daily bag limits based on population surveys and banding data."

Wisconsin bands about 4,000 mallards each year. How many survive from year to year, how many are harvested, and where they are harvested are the types of data most important to us, said Van Horn. About 70% of the mallards harvested by Wisconsin hunters were banded in Wisconsin or adjacent jurisdictions, while states to our south harvest mallards from a much broader range across North America.

"Each year, I work with the USFWS and other states in our flyway to determine banding needs for various migratory game bird species," said Van Horn. "I then receive Wisconsin's responsibility for our part of the overall continental program and develop an annual banding plan for our staff."

"**James Christopoulos**, biologist in the Bureau of Wildlife Management, and I then coordinate staff across the state to annually band about 4,000 mallards, 4,000 Canada geese, 1,500 wood ducks and 800 mourning doves. Rich manages the banding inventory, distribution and data management at the state level. The Wisconsin DNR statewide team of wildlife biologists captures and bands these birds across the state each year."



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Retiree seeks DNR artists for 2010 "Guardians of Nature" exhibit

DNR retiree **Dave Edwards** is seeking interest from current and retired department employees in participating in a potential exhibit of landscape and wildlife art to be sponsored by the Beaver Dam Area Arts Association. If the interest is there, the non-juried exhibit will run from August 29 through October 10, 2010.

"I've seen some wonderful artwork created by DNR employees. I'm working with the not-for-profit [Beaver Dam Area Arts Association](#) to determine whether there would be enough interest to build a wildlife art exhibit consisting exclusively of artwork done by those still employed with the department and those who've retired," said Edwards.



This photo of the Virgin River flowing through Zion National Park in southwest Utah is an example of the artwork that would be included in the "Guardians of Nature" exhibit in fall 2010 in Beaver Dam.

Image copyright Dave Edwards Photography, LLC 2009

A contingent of at least 35 artists would be needed to justify an exhibit, explained Edwards.

Wildlife artwork, for the purposes of this exhibit, is defined as original photography, paintings, drawings, wildlife mounts, wood carvings, jewelry, and other similar pieces.

"Wildlife art exhibits are relatively common, but to the best of my knowledge this would be the first of its kind exclusively featuring the artwork of DNR folks," said Edwards.

Artists will be responsible for delivery and pick-up of their work. There is no fee for participating in the exhibit. Artists have the option of selling their work and if they do, the Beaver Dam arts association will receive a 30% commission per sale. Those interested in displaying their artwork at this landscape and wildlife exhibit should email [Dave Edwards](#) or call him at (920) 887-0962 by January 30.

Footnote: *Dave Edwards worked for DNR for 28 years in the Waste Management and Environmental Enforcement programs.*



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Reminder to sign up for Wisconsin Project WILD workshop

If you haven't already signed up for DNR's Project Wild program on the afternoon of January 28, you'll want to re-read "[Wisconsin Project Wild workshop could make your job easier.](#)" in the November 5 issue of the "DNR Digest." To register for this free workshop, email [Amalia Baldwin](#) natural resources educator in the Office of Communication by January 8. By attending the four-hour "Making Wildlife Education Easy!" workshop sponsored by DNR's Project WILD program, you can learn how to teach today's wildlife concepts through fun, hands-on and engaging activities. Baldwin will get back to those who have registered with the location closer to the date of the workshop.



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Submit year-end time and travel reports by December deadlines

*By: Roy Pedretti, Bureau of Human Resources and Jane Launderville, Bureau of Finance
Payroll and time reporting due earlier for pay period ending December 19*

Due to the holidays, time reports for the pay period ending December 19, 2009 must be submitted by 11 a.m. on Monday, December 21. **All LTE hours must be submitted by this deadline to be paid on the December 30 check.**

Amended time reports to change leave types also must be submitted no later than 11 a.m. on December 21. It takes two complete pay periods before an amended time report is fully processed. Submitting amended time reports by this deadline will prevent the transactions from crossing calendar years, as well as delays caused by manual processes.

If you'll be going on extended vacation through the end of the calendar year, you must submit your time report before taking off. When submitting time reports for a future pay period, use the "Extended Leave Time Report" button.

December 24, 25, 31 and January 1 are legal holidays. If these holidays occur on your regularly scheduled work days, record your Saturday/legal holiday hours on these holidays, unless your supervisor directs you to work on the holidays to meet a compelling business need. Contact your payroll representative if you have questions regarding this requirement. Those employees who are retiring and will stop working during this pay period must submit all time reports through their retirement date.

December 29 at 4:30 p.m. is the deadline for supervisors to forward approved annual leave carry over requests to their payroll representative.

TRIPS and manual travel voucher approval dates altered for December

Reimbursement for travel expenses that you want included in your December 30 paycheck must be submitted to your supervisor for approval by December 18. TRIPS Travel Vouchers requiring that you attach travel expense receipts, as well as manual travel vouchers, must be submitted to central office or regional finance specialists by December 18.

Employees' 2009 W-2 tax statements will reflect reimbursements of travel that appear on their December 30 paychecks. If finance specialists don't receive travel vouchers by the December deadline, reimbursements will appear on a paycheck in 2010 and, therefore, will be reflected on W-2s for 2010.

Editor's Note: The Bureau of Human Resources sent out this information on December 14 regarding LTEs reporting time for the December 9 snow day:

Because LTEs are only paid for hours worked, they're not eligible to use the DWSD activity code for any scheduled work hours lost on December 9. In lieu of being eligible to use the DWSD activity code, LTEs will be allowed to make up the scheduled work hours missed on due to the recent inclement weather. Typically, hours can only be made up during the week they're missed, however, all LTE's will have the ability to make them up by December 30, providing work is available.

Footnote: *Roy Pedretti is chief of the Payroll and Benefits Section, and Jane Launderville is chief of the General*



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2009 Bill Tracker: Legislature was busy with DNR-related bills

By: Paul Heinen, Office of the Secretary

The halls of the Wisconsin capitol building have grown much quieter with the approach of the holidays. Although there are no additional activities to highlight, the ["2009 Bill Tracker"](#) provides a complete picture of DNR-related legislation, either in the works or signed into law.

Watch for information on the 2010 floor session in future issues of the "DNR Digest," after the Legislature returns to work on January 19.

Footnote: *Paul Heinen is a policy initiative advisor for the Secretary's Office.*



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