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## Send in your nominations for Secretary's PRIDE Awards

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**Secretary Matt Frank** is calling for nominations for the third annual "Secretary's PRIDE Awards." Sec. Frank created this group of awards to recognize the everyday accomplishments of DNR employees. Co-workers are in the best position to observe, directly or indirectly, the work of their colleagues and, therefore, are the best source of nominations.

Once nominations come in for individuals or teams, a review panel of their peers will determine award winners. Every nominee will be honored for their outstanding contributions toward achieving DNR's mission.



Following the 2009 "PRIDE Award" presentations, Secretary Matt Frank personally congratulated Dave Woodbury, Bureau of Law Enforcement and member of the "Dream Team."  
WDNR Photo

Employees may nominate more than one individual or team in any of the categories listed below. Nominations are to specify the one category most appropriate for recognizing the individual or the team.

Whether submitting for consideration the work of one colleague or a team of fellow employees, a nomination must qualify under one of these five categories:

- Partnership:** The **Partnership Spirit Award** recognizes an individual's exceptional efforts to achieve DNR's mission through the development and enhancement of internal or external partnerships.
- Resource:** The **Sustained Achievement Award** recognizes an individual for long-term, sustained accomplishments, and/or for leaving a special legacy of such value that they have become a DNR "resource."
- Individual:** The **Individual Achievement Award** recognizes an individual for their efforts to further the DNR's mission through innovation, efficiency, quality of work or working environment.
- Dream Team:** The **Dream Team Award** recognizes a work team, permanent or ad hoc, for furthering DNR's mission through innovation, efficiency, quality of work or working environment.
- Excellence:** The **Leadership Excellence Award** recognizes an individual for their leadership role in

furthering DNR's mission. The peer review panel will look for excellence in such areas as big-picture thinking, communicating a vision, strategic thinking, effective decision-making, building trust, managing conflict, promoting diversity, fostering innovation and advocating change. You can find all of last year's "PRIDE Award" recipients in the May 7, 2009 "Digest" story "[2009 Secretary's 'PRIDE Awards' honor DNR employees.](#)"

#### **From nomination to awards ceremony**

You'll find information on the nomination process and the nomination form on the "[Secretary's PRIDE Award](#)" Intranet page or in the "[Secretary's Corner.](#)"

**Nominations are due by Thursday, April 15.** The winner in each category will receive an invitation to attend a recognition ceremony at the Capitol hosted by Sec. Frank on Wednesday, May 5 of Employee Recognition Week. Watch "MyDNR Digest" for information on the time and location of this year's ceremony.



### **Biologist Charlie Kilian garners Wildlife Society award**

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

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Veteran DNR wildlife biologist **Charlie Kilian**, based in Lake Mills, recently received kudos from the Wisconsin Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS) for his work enhancing wildlife resources in the south-central area of the state.

Kilian has served as DNR's wildlife biologist for Jefferson County since 1990. The Wildlife Society's Don Rusch Memorial Award annually goes to a working professional who has made outstanding contributions to wildlife conservation in Wisconsin.



Charlie Kilian (left) posed with Scott Walter after accepting the 2010 Wisconsin Chapter of the Wildlife Society's Rusch Memorial Award.  
WDNR Photo

"Throughout a long and distinguished career with Wisconsin DNR, Charlie has established himself as an energetic and innovative steward of Wisconsin's wildlife resources and the habitats upon which that wildlife depends," noted Dr. Scott Walter, associate professor of biology at UW-Richland Center.

"He has also been a solid advocate for the role of hunting in wildlife conservation, having grasped seemingly every opportunity to introduce new groups of students or young adults to the hunting tradition," added Walter, who nominated Kilian for the 2010 award.

The award's namesake, who died unexpectedly in 1999, was a renowned wildlife researcher at the University of Wisconsin. [The Wildlife Society](#) is a scientific and educational organization composed of wildlife professionals, students and retirees interested in the conservation of Wisconsin's wildlife resources, according to the society's Web site.

Walter pointed out that Kilian's efforts on behalf of the state's wildlife were "seminal" in creating and restoring vast acreages of wetland and grassland habitats in south-central Wisconsin, including:

- the 3,000-acre Jefferson Marsh Wildlife Area,
- the 2,000-acre Zeloski Marsh Unit on the Lake Mills Wildlife Area,
- 11 wildlife properties within the Glacial Heritage Area,
- and the Crawfish Prairie Habitat Area, land utilized extensively by Aldo Leopold and his students in the 1930s.

"Charlie also was among the first DNR biologists to develop mourning dove management areas on public

lands and has been an extremely vigorous advocate of mentoring young hunters. It's a rare year that he doesn't take young hunters out on the youth duck hunt," said Walter.

Kilian also was involved in creating UW-Madison's Student Hunter Education Program that introduces wildlife management majors to the practice and tradition of hunting.

"I can think of no individual who better reflects Don's (Rusch) conservation ethic, nor anyone who has labored harder to put it into practice," added Walter.

**Footnote:** *Greg Matthews manages public affairs matters for the South Central Region.*



### Apply for Citizen-Based Monitoring Partnership funds by March 31

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**Since 2004, DNR and the Citizen-Based Monitoring Partnership Program have sought to expand volunteer participation in monitoring of natural resources by providing funding and assistance to high priority projects.**



Sabrina Adams, a student at Hartford University School in Milwaukee, held a Swainson's thrush while helping with a bird banding and monitoring project at the Urban Ecology Center in Milwaukee.

Photo courtesy of the Urban Ecology Center

**For the 2011 fiscal year (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011) the Partnership Program has \$100,000 available. Individual proposals are limited to \$4,999. DNR staff are eligible and encouraged to apply; however, qualifying projects must be coordinated by citizen groups, include significant citizen participation, or be directly relevant to citizen projects. Monitoring topics may include aquatic and terrestrial species, natural communities, and environmental components such as water, soil and air.**

**The deadline to apply is March 31**, which is earlier than past years. The schedule was advanced by approximately one month to better align with the typical surge in project planning and staff hiring ahead of summer field seasons.

Don't pass on this opportunity! Even if you haven't started a proposal, the application requirements are reasonable and straightforward. Find Application guidelines at the ["Citizen-Based Monitoring Network of Wisconsin"](#) Web site. Contact **Loren Ayers**, research scientist in the Bureau of Endangered Resources, at (608) 261-6449 for more information.



### CWD prevalence rates continue to rise in South Central Region

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

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DNR samples and tests of more than 7,100 deer during 2009 in the Chronic Wasting Disease-Management Zone (CWD-MZ), found 175 testing positive for CWD. Test results in the 210 square mile Western Core Area, which mainly encompasses western Dane and eastern Iowa counties, show that the overall trend in the prevalence rate – the percentage of deer testing positive for CWD – continues to increase. The Western Core Area has the highest prevalence rates in Wisconsin.

Since 2002, and despite yearly fluctuations, overall prevalence increases are apparent in all sex and age classes. Testing in the core area over the past eight years has found prevalence:

- in adult males has risen from about 10 percent to over 12 percent;
- in adult females the increase has been from about four percent to about six percent;
- in yearling males the number has increased from about two percent to about four percent;
- in yearling females has jumped from two percent to nearly six percent.

Simply put, disease prevalence is higher in males than females and higher in adults than yearlings,” said **Davin Lopez**, DNR’s CWD project leader.

DNR biologists and technicians conducted aerial surveys this winter by helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft in the CWD-MZ. The 2009 post-hunt population in the CWD-MZ is estimated to be 164,300 compared to: 176,300 in 2008, down seven percent; about 185,000 in 2007; and 190,000 in 2006. The total deer harvest in the CWD-MZ in 2009 was 66,013.

DNR biologists know well that after eight years there’s still no easy answer to managing CWD. They’re firm in believing, however, that based on all available evidence, the disease poses a significant threat to the long-term health of Wisconsin’s deer herd and that it is a statewide issue.

“We take our responsibility to manage the disease very seriously in order to try and protect this herd for future generations, the very definition of wildlife conservation. The goal is to minimize the distribution and intensity of CWD,” said Lopez.

“We must take a long-term view of disease management to accomplish this and as we revise our CWD Management Plan, we will again be looking at what this means in terms of different strategies,” he added.

**Footnote:** *Greg Matthews is the public affairs manager for the South Central Region and has documented the CWD issue in Wisconsin from the beginning.*



## Many recognized for their efforts to manage Wisconsin’s wildlife

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### **Wildlife’s champions found inside and outside program**

**Editor’s Note:** The following segments recognizing DNR employees, both within the Bureau of Wildlife Management and from other DNR programs, are attributed to either the presenters or the nomination papers for each award.

#### **Keith Warnke receives special award from Secretary**



Joining Keith Warnke upon receiving the DNR Special Recognition Award were his father Don, wife Amy, and daughters Olivia and Sophie.

WDNR Photo

In kicking off the annual Wildlife Management Awards Luncheon on March 3, Secretary **Matt Frank** invited **Keith Warnke** to join him at the podium, referring to DNR's big game ecologist as the "unbreakable common thread through all these time consuming adventures" that are the deer issues DNR has faced during the secretary's five-year tenure.

Presenting Warnke with a DNR Special Recognition Award, Sec. Frank spoke of him as the "heart and engine of our DNR deer team," much deserving of this special recognition. The person whose job no one else covets, deer hunters can reach Warnke 24/7 via e-mail, twitter and FaceBook, pointed out the Secretary. In fact, when Wildlife Management bureau director Tom Hauge "'googled" Warnke's name, he found 37,800 references.

Sec. Frank noted Warnke's generosity for giving of his time, especially the time away from his family. And, "he's done it all with grace, integrity and professionalism."

#### **John Huff named 2009 Wildlife Biologist of the Year**

One of the reasons that **John Huff**, Peshtigo, was presented with the Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award is that he "exemplifies what it means to be a professional wildlife manager by owning a sharp understanding of scientific principles and bringing them into the arena of social, economic and ecological influences that impact wildlife management."



John Huff's family joined him after he received his award: (left to right) daughter Laura, wife Paula and sister Carol.

WDNR Photo

Huff is viewed as having a keen interest in the specific needs of threatened and endangered species and native communities. His location in the state is unique in that it requires a diverse ability to manage everything from county forests to coastal wetlands.

Huff is known for his work on the Deer and Bear Advisory Committees, due to his "analytical nature and ability to recognize information needs and pursue solutions that provide practical advancements in wildlife management."

Huff's accomplishments are many and varied. Just to mention a few, he:

- successfully identified and advocated for Conservation Opportunity Areas within the Wildlife Action Plan;
- secured funding through the State Wildlife Grants program for invasive species control work;
- worked collaboratively with forestry, fish management, endangered resources, water regulations, basin educators and real estate;
- partnered with local governments, sportsman's clubs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy; and
- worked with research staff to determine his region's deer aging station priorities.

#### **Eric Borchert recognized as Wildlife Technician of the Year**

The 2009 Wildlife Technician of the Year award went to **Eric Borchert**, Antigo, who is described as having "...a wide breadth of work experience. In the wildlife profession, where he is well known as a real mover and shaker, he excels in cultivating relationships and partnerships."





Eric Borchert accepted his Wildlife Technician of the Year Award from Sec. Matt Frank  
WDNR Photo

Working without a biologist on his team for nearly 20 years, Borchert has been successful because he shares the values of the department as a whole, holding his program together during both the good times and the challenging times.

More specifically, "he serves people and treats them with respect. He holds himself accountable for his actions, especially when things don't go as planned."

Borchert's accomplishments include:

- Spearheading several local Learn-to-Hunt programs.
- Providing leadership on several statewide initiatives.
- Partnering with a wide variety of public and private organizations as well as partner programs within the department.

The Forestry Program also recognized Borchert as a true "Friend of Forestry," because the program has "come to depend on him to support the Fire Suppression program."

#### **2009 Leadership Award goes to Greg Dahl**

**Greg Dahl**, Wisconsin Rapids, is credited with being "a steady ship that stays on course in a rough sea, applying creativity to doing the job when faced with budget cuts and multiple vacancies." His ability to anticipate his staff's needs is referred to as "uncanny."



Daughter Savanna and wife Sharon joined Greg Dahl in proudly displaying his award.  
WDNR Photo

Specifically, Dahl's co-workers seek out his advice as someone who can "think quickly, but speak slowly."

Dahl's career highlights include:

- Fostering and maintaining numerous and varied partnerships.
- Initiating and leading his staff in writing grants to obtain funds to manage grasslands on both state and private property.
- Going above and beyond the call of duty by assuming the duties of his previous position as the Portage County biologist.
- Giving of his time to the Greater Prairie-Chicken translocation and research project since it was first discussed in 2005.

The nomination for this award comes from the recipient's peers in the field. "Greg's countless contributions to the wildlife program not only make a positive change on the landscape, but continue to influence many of his co-workers to strive towards excellence in wildlife management."

#### **Brian Glenzinski receives the SER Special Recognition Award**



Area supervisor and acting regional wildlife manager Dale Katsma (right) posed with Brian Glenzinski upon receiving a Special Recognition Award.  
WDNR Photo

The Southeast Region (SER) presented its 2009 Special Recognition Award to wildlife biologist **Brian Glenzinski**, Waukesha. Most notable among his accomplishments were "forging partnerships and securing alternative funding to increase the habitat work in Waukesha and Walworth Counties," to the tune of over \$300,000 "to supplement base wildlife habitat operations in the 2010/11 biennium."

Glenzinski's accomplishments include:

- Leading an effort to obtain a \$1 million grant for land acquisition within the Mukwonago and Fox River watersheds.
- Obtaining State Wildlife Grant funds for oak savanna and sedge meadow work in the Southern Kettle Moraine.
- Bringing in Waterfowl Stamp grants for wetland restoration, invasive species control, and vegetation management; Turkey Stamp funds for managing hardwood stands; and Pheasant Stamp funds for grassland management.
- Procuring funds from the Fox River Commission for erosion control and dike maintenance work on Vernon Marsh Wildlife Area and from the Vernon Marsh Friends group for property improvements.

#### **West Central Region's Special Recognition Award bestowed on Michele Kille**

In reference to **Michele Kille**, Madison, wildlife biologist and finance specialist from the bureau's Wildlife Ecology Section, "The person that the West Central Region would like to honor with a Special Service Award this year has not only helped our region, but is much appreciated by other regions, the bureau and other organizations," particularly "for outstanding work on waterfowl and wetland issues."



West Central Region wildlife supervisor Kris Belling (left) congratulated Michele Kille on her Special Recognition Award.  
WDNR Photo

Kille assists **Ricky Lien**, wildlife biologist in Plymouth, with the Wetland Habitat Coordination Program. Her position includes assisting with the Migratory Game Bird Committee meetings; tracking the State Waterfowl Stamp expenditures; coordinating the State Waterfowl Stamp contest; and assisting Ducks Unlimited (DU) with the administration of several North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants, generating \$26 million for wetland conservation

Kille also has succeeded at:

- Partnering with DU, which has been extensive, varied and extremely critical
- Authoring and reviewing grant proposals, securing commitment letters and finalizing funding agreements
- Providing information for annual and final reports; and
- Verifying match money.

In 2009 alone, Kille helped initiate three new grants and finalize three other offers.

#### **2009 Special Recognition Award presented to Tia Kropf-Beringer**



Wildlife Management Services Section chief Joanne Farnsworth congratulated Tia Kropf-Beringer with a Special Recognition Award.  
WDNR Photo

"Let's begin by stating the obvious: Tia's technical expertise, determination and exemplary work ethic have made Wildlife Management's Intranet and Internet the envy of our peers." **Tia Kropf-Beringer** received a Special Recognition Award for her work on the program's Internet site, "a high-wire act that balances 'Department Policy and Guidelines' with 'Program Needs and Artistic Desires.'"

Kropf-Beringer received critical acclaim for pioneering the MediaSite catalog for the 2009 deer hunt forecast videos. "This new presentation... garnered international recognition for the DNR Web site via Sonic



Foundry Corporation's news releases.”

**Science Services honored Scott Hull with special award**

**Scott Hull**, upland wildlife research scientist in the Bureau of Science Services (formerly the Wildlife Management upland wildlife ecologist and farm bill coordinator) received the Science Service’s Wildlife Management Special Services award

Hull’s strong research abilities hold “good science and science-based management in high regard,” and are seen as key to making sound management choices



Bureau of Science Services' Karl Martin presented his bureau's Special Recognition Award to Scott Hull  
WDNR Photo

Hull was responsible for leading the Greater Prairie-chicken translocation project, which included coordinating DNR, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, UW– Madison and Milwaukee, University of Minnesota and private conservation groups to keep the project moving forward.

Hull’s accomplishments include:

- Revising the species management plans for ring-necked pheasants and sharp-tailed grouse.
- Initiating a sharp-tail grouse genetics, habitat modeling and ecology research project with UW-Madison, Central Michigan University and Science Services.
- Working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Pheasants Forever to create and fund five farm bill biologist positions.
- Making innovative improvements to DNR species surveys “to produce more reliable and meaningful data.”
- Working with Science Services to design wildlife monitoring protocols for the State Acres for Wildlife (SAFE) program.

“The department receives 115% from Scott. He does the work of more than one staff person, because he cares deeply about the wildlife resources in Wisconsin.”

**Forester Brad Hutnik honored for contributions to Wildlife Program**

**Brad Hutnik**, forester for the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, received recognition from the Bureau of Wildlife Management for his contributions to the agency’s Wildlife Management Program.



Brad Hutnik demonstrated how to measure a tree at the 2009 River Valley Youth Conservation Day held at Tower Hill State Park, in 2009.

WDNR Photo

The program presented Hutnik, Spring Green, with a "Special Recognition Award," citing his understanding that wildlife habitat maintenance is integral to overall landscape management.

"Brad has a tremendous team spirit and a tireless concern for all aspects of the riverway, including its wildlife." In his capacity as Riverway forester, Hutnick is responsible for administering all agency forestry activities along the 92-mile riverway corridor.

"His passion for wildlife is evident as he has become an avid birder, fulfilling his personal need to continuously increase his knowledge of the wildlife that inhabit the area he oversees."

Examples of Hutnik's contributions to the Wildlife Program include:

- Assisting with writing burn plans and participating in prescribed burns.
- Helping customers at the Spring Green office with wildlife-related questions.
- Surveying, documenting and helping with invasive species management.
- Using his GIS skills to plot red-shoulder hawk nests within the riverway.
- Considering wildlife values and potential improvements before, during and after timber harvests.



### "Smokey's Office" TV and radio spots promote wildfire prevention

By: Catherine Koele, Bureau of Forest Protection

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The Bureau of Forest Protection purchased radio and television time with the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association to air its newest fire prevention awareness public service announcements "Smokey's Office." The 30-second spots will air statewide on 197 radio stations and 28 television stations from March 29 through April 25.

The campaign's target message encourages viewers and listeners to obtain burn permits. Smokey himself makes an appearance in the TV announcement. The public is provided the toll free number 1(888)WIS-BURN (947-2876) and ["Burning Permits, Current Fire Danger"](#) Web site to check daily before beginning a burn.

To view the TV spot, go to ["Smokey's Office"](#) on the DNR Web site. Write me, [Catherine Koele](#) with any questions you have regarding the campaign, or call me at (608)266-2359.

**Footnote:** *Catherine Koele is a wildfire prevention specialist in the Bureau of Forest Protection.*



### Donor health problem delays Kou Xiong's surgery

By: Jackie Frase, West Central Region

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**Kou Xiong**, West Central Region's Hmong liaison who had been waiting for the arrival of a kidney donor from Thailand, last week received the bad news that he'll not be able to accept this donor's organ. Upon receiving the results of a medical test performed at the Mayo Clinic, Xiong learned that the donor's doctors in Thailand hadn't detected a lung problem.

Xiong immediately expressed his appreciation for all of the financial help he received from fellow DNR employees. "At this time, I do not know what I will do, since I have no more hope of getting a kidney. I will have to continue with dialysis with the Luther Hospital. Again, thank you everyone very, very much for all your contributions."

Refer to the January 28 "MyDNR Digest" story ["Call goes out to help WCR's Kou Xiong withtransplant."](#)

As he continues dialysis, Xiong's name is back on the list to receive a donated kidney from someone who has died. There is no way to know when or if that will happen.

There is a "plan B," however. It's still possible that a living donor will contribute a kidney. Still, that will mean more tests and more time. As Xiong's supervisor, I will keep everyone informed on his health.

Additional funds will be needed to pay for the expenses associated with receiving a kidney. West Central Region is providing support for a raffle to raise some of these funds. The Kou Transplant Fund continues to accept donations. The deadline for the raffle is April 15, with the drawing on April 20.

Contact me, [Jackie Frase](#), with any questions about the raffle. Mail other donations to me at DNR, P.O. Box 4001, Eau Claire WI 54702.



## Wisconsin launches new organ "Donor Registry"

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At "[YesIWillWisconsin.org](http://YesIWillWisconsin.org)," you can make a difference

In April, the State of Wisconsin is launching a new online "Donor Registry" that will help the public more easily and efficiently volunteer to become organ and tissue donors after their deaths. Many DNR employees already are volunteering, carrying the orange donor volunteer dot on their driver's licenses.

The new "[YesIWillWisconsin.com](http://YesIWillWisconsin.com)" Web site sponsored by the Department of Health Services will result in more potential donors of organs, tissues and eyes, saving or enhancing the lives of tens of thousands of people.

In Wisconsin, more than 1,500 families, friends and neighbors are waiting for donations. Take a few minutes to make a difference by registering, even if you already carry the orange dot on your driver's license. Share your intent to be a donor at "[YesIWillWisconsin.com](http://YesIWillWisconsin.com)." Visit the "[Donate Life Wisconsin](http://DonateLifeWisconsin.com)" Web site to learn more about this non-profit organization dedicated to saving lives.



## Biologist, landowner and utilities set up osprey platform

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

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A public and private effort came together recently to erect an artificial osprey nesting platform on private property in northern Rock County near Lake Koshkonong.



The WE Energies crew took about an hour to erect the 50-foot pole and osprey platform.  
WDNR Photo

Landowner John VanAltena, Jr. and his wife Constance Brouillette have worked for many years with the Bureau of Endangered Resources prairie and oak savanna ecologist **Darcy Kind**, Madison. The couple asked if Kind would help in placing an osprey platform on his property.

"John and his wife have voluntarily worked to protect an outstanding population of Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchids (a federal/state threatened species) on their property, in addition to actively managing and restoring outstanding sedge meadow and oak opening communities," noted Kind. Wildlife biologists **Mike Foy**, Fitchburg, and **Brian Glenzinski**, Waukesha, worked with Kind on this project.

VanAltena had seen osprey on his land, currently protected through the State Natural Areas program, and was interested in putting-up an osprey platform to promote nesting. About 75 percent of osprey nests in Wisconsin are on artificial platforms, according to the "Wisconsin All-Bird Conservation Plan."

VanAltena and Brouillette worked to secure donated equipment, time and labor from American Transmission Company (ATC) and WE Energies. ATC donated the nesting platform and WE Energies a 50-foot long pole, which they installed at a location with "a great view of Lake Koshkonong," said Kind.

"Once Darcy began the project, it seemed to all just come crashing in quickly, efficiently and successfully. I am, of course, aware of many of the hurdles she had to navigate around, over and under to get this together. Just the permitting process to dig on a borderline wetland to put in a pole was a real eye-opener for me," said VanAltena.



Endangered Resource's Darcy Kind helped bring together the partnership that built and erected the osprey nest platform near Lake Koshkonong.  
WDNR Photo

VanAltena built the nest using black locust and white cedar, because these species are rot resistance. He tied the nest together with small gauge stainless steel wire. Finally, he painted the platform's aluminum frame to dull its appearance.

The platform now stands in the middle of a large white-fringed prairie orchid site and "I'm hoping to get a photo of the platform and orchids in bloom in the foreground as an example of endangered species sharing similar habitats," said VanAltena.

The osprey (*Pandion Haliaeetus*), also known as the fish hawk, is included on Wisconsin's Endangered Species list as threatened. Ospreys are summer residents in the state. They return in mid-April from southerly wintering grounds. When three-years old and sexually mature, they will mate and nest.

The osprey is Wisconsin's only bird of prey that plunges into the water to capture fish. They feed primarily on fresh panfish and suckers and search for fish while flying 30 to 100 feet above the water.

**Footnote:** *Greg Matthews is the public affairs manager for the South Central Region.*



#### Legislature now on break until mid April

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**The Wisconsin Assembly and Senate are on recess until April 13, when they'll return for the final floor session of 2010. For a summary of DNR-related legislation up to this point, go to the ["2010 Bill Tracker."](#)**

#### Most recent highlights of interest:

- The Senate Natural Resources Committee voted 3-1 to pass **AB 219** (Rep. Fred Clark), the bill that mandates that kids under 12 years old must wear life vests in boats under 26 feet in length. The next step will be the final Senate vote on this bill.
- The Senate Natural Resources Committee also had a hearing on two Natural Resources Board (NRB) membership bills: **AB 470** (Rep. Amy Sue Vruwink), mandating that one NRB member have an agricultural background; and **AB 495** (Rep. Chris Danou) mandating that three NRB members have hunting, fishing or trapping licenses. No votes were taken on either bill.

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



## Spring means annual SCR bike/walk challenge begins

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

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The relatively warm March weather and the beginning of South Central Region's(SCR) Sixth Annual 15,000 Mile Bike/Walk-to-Work Challenge already have inspired some regional staff members to get themselves to work without their cars.



Warming-up for the 2010 "Bike/Walk-to-Work Challenge" are (left to right) SCR's Wendell "Wendy" Wojner, Percy Mather, Hank Kuehling, Lloyd Eagan and Ron Grasshoff  
WDNR Photo

During the March through October challenge, all SCR employees are encouraged to bicycle or walk to work, and their miles are recorded. Although an employee's circumstances may not allow for biking or walking to work, up to 45 people have participated in each of the past challenges, according to coordinator and hydrogeologist **Hank Kuehling**, Fitchburg.

This year, as in years past, several regional employee challenge supporters will make a contribution to a charitable organization, either as a lump sum or based on total challenge miles reported. The total contribution in past years has varied from between \$850 and \$1,000, with most of the money going to a food bank.

Kuehling pointed out that advantages abound with the challenge, including reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and gas used; employees become more fit; vehicle lives are extended; and the Second Harvest Food Bank and other charitable organizations receive much-needed contributions.

"It's certainly a win, win, win scenario," said Kuehling.

**Footnote:** *Greg Matthews is South Central Region's public affairs manager.*



## On the national forest, cribs aren't just for babies

By: Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest News Release

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With help from partners like DNR and a local lake association, staff of the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF) is managing and restoring Waubee Lake in northeastern Wisconsin. To provide deeper water habitats for the fish dwelling in the lake, cooperative efforts placed a total of 14 eight-foot-by-eight-foot log cribs on the ice. In the spring, they'll drop into 14 to 16 feet of water.





A member of the crew lashes logs together to construct a fish crib.  
WDNR Photo

The cribs were constructed from 65 down trees placed along the lake's shoreline. These trees provide refuge, forage, cover and spawning areas for Lake Waubee's inhabitants.

Work was done through an ongoing, successful partnership between the CNNF, DNR and the Waubee Lake Improvement Association. The association's members contributed a total of 28 volunteer days. Many supplies and materials were brought to the lake prior to building the cribs on the ice.

The project hired a logger to deliver 250 hard maple pulp logs to the lake, along with 36 hardwood (maple) tree tops. Volunteers and CNNF staff then put the cribs together.



A finished fish crib awaits placement in Lake Waubee, where fish will take up residence.  
WDNR Photo

The crews used the hardwood tree tops to "stuff" the cribs with brush. Stuffing is one of the most important keys to holding fish in and around the cribs. The brush provides small voids where small fish can escape from large fish predators. The larger fish hang around the cribs because they serve as their "grocery store" and provide critical hiding cover from predators.

This project aligns with the ongoing efforts on the CNNF to restore aquatic species habitats across the forest. Through ongoing monitoring, the CNNF has seen beneficial results from similar restoration projects.



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