

CONSERVATION POLICY RESOLUTIONS

Interim Resolution #01 Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: MUCC Wildlife Committee
Passed: MUCC Board of Directors, October 10, 2015
Title: **ISLE ROYALE MOOSE MANAGEMENT**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, the moose population at Michigan's Isle Royale National Park is currently estimated at
2 1,250 animals and that moose population is expected to continue to increase with only three wolves
3 remaining on the island; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, the growing moose population on Isle Royale will soon reach a point where they
5 damage the island's vegetation, reducing favored winter moose browse along with the capacity of the
6 habitat to support as many moose; and
- 7 **WHEREAS**, should science-based research determine that moose populations have exceeded, or are
8 likely to exceed, the carrying capacity of the island to the detriment of the overall herd health,
9 vegetation and bio-communities of the island then a culling system should be implemented; and
- 10 **WHEREAS**, considering the wilderness designation of Isle Royale National Park, culling moose is
11 the best way to manage that population and reduce damage to the island's vegetation and maintain a
12 healthy moose population; and
- 13 **WHEREAS**, involving the public in culling moose at Isle Royale through a limited entry drawing
14 can generate revenue to help cover the cost of that type of management through the sale of moose
15 culling permits; and

16 **WHEREAS**, MUCC supported naming moose a game species in Michigan and is always in favor of
17 scientifically based, regulated hunting opportunities rather than culling; however, it is understood that
18 Isle Royale National Park expressly prohibits hunting at this time. NOW,
19 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that MUCC supports culling moose on Isle Royale National
20 Park to manage the population and protect the island's vegetation and that the public be permitted to
21 do the culling through a limited entry drawing from groups of two to four participants that would
22 purchase a moose culling permit; and
23 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that MUCC supports such measures as an alternative to artificial
24 relocation (human placement) of predator species to this island, such as wolves.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #01:

In 2015, the National Park Service (NPS) asked for feedback regarding the purpose, need, and range of preliminary alternative management concepts for the Moose-Wolf-Vegetation Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Isle Royale National Park (park). This resolution was adopted by the MUCC Board of Directors to serve as direction to MUCC staff on preparing comments on that Plan and EIS. During the public scoping comment period, 115 people attended public meetings and the NPS received feedback from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 19 other countries, including MUCC.

However, based on the public comments the NPS received and additional internal deliberations, the NPS has determined that it will revise and narrow the scope of this EIS to focus on the question of whether to bring wolves to Isle Royale National Park in the near term, and if so, how to do so. Over the past five years the wolf population has declined steeply; there were three wolves documented on the island as of March 2015 and only two wolves have been confirmed as of February 2016. At this time, natural recovery of the population is unlikely. The NPS is no longer considering moose movement or culling as an alternative.

It would be helpful to add an additional clause to the resolution (BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT MUCC SUPPORTS THE NPS IN MOVING FORWARD WITH ALTERNATIVE X, WHERE THE NPS WOULD Y” indicating preference for the new alternatives below.

Based on the revised purpose statement, the NPS is now considering the following alternatives:

- **Alternative A** (No-Action Alternative). The NPS would not intervene and would continue current management. Wolves may come and go through natural migration, although the current population of wolves may die out.
- **Alternative B**. The NPS would bring wolves to Isle Royale as a one-time event over a defined period of time (e.g. over a 36 month period) to increase the longevity of the wolf population on the island. This action would occur as soon as possible following a signed record of decision.

- **Alternative C.** The NPS would bring wolves to Isle Royale as often as needed in order to maintain a population of wolves on the island for at least the next 20 years, which is the anticipated life of the plan. The wolf population range and number of breeding pairs to be maintained on the island would be determined based on best available science and professional judgement. This action would occur as soon as possible following a signed record of decision.
- **Alternative D.** The NPS would not take immediate action and would continue current management, allowing natural processes to continue. One or more resource indicators and thresholds would be developed to evaluate the condition of key resources, which could include moose or vegetation-based parameters. If a threshold is met, wolves would be brought to Isle Royale as a one-time event (per alternative B) or through multiple introductions (per alternative C).

DNR COMMENTS #01:

Culling of overabundant wildlife is a common yet controversial practice within the National Park Service (NPS) system. In fact, culls have been undertaken in Yellowstone National Park for bison, Rocky Mountain National Park for elk, and white tailed deer in Valley Forge National Historical Park, to name a few. The Department supports regulated hunting as an approach to manage overabundant wildlife, a view that is currently not held by the NPS. Culls, when implemented correctly, should be handled by highly qualified and skilled marksmen for the purpose of safety and humane euthanasia. These practices should not be undertaken by individuals without the required training, expertise, or equipment. The NPS is currently in the middle of a Moose-Wolf-Vegetation Management Plan/EIS that includes the option of managing moose populations in the park. The Department will be providing input to the NPS once they are further along their EIS timeline.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #01: Wildlife Committee supports, unanimously

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #01: Supports

Proposed Resolution #02

Submitted by: Richard P. Smith, MUCC Life Member
 Passed: MUCC Region I, February 6, 2016
 Title: **TO DISCOURAGE USE OF CHOCOLATE AS BEAR BAIT**

- 1 **WHEREAS** a 43-pound black bear cub died of theobromine poisoning during the fall of 2010 in
- 2 Alcona County from eating too much chocolate at a bear bait; and
- 3 **WHEREAS** theobromine is an ingredient in chocolate that can be toxic to bears and other wildlife in
- 4 large quantities, with the highest concentration of theobromine contained within unsweetened baker's
- 5 chocolate; and
- 6 **WHEREAS** milk chocolate has a much lower level of theobromine; and

7 **WHEREAS** chocolate is sometimes used as bear bait by hunters who do not understand that
8 chocolate can be toxic to black bears and other wildlife in large amounts; and
9 **WHEREAS** some raccoons have also died of theobromine poisoning from eating too much chocolate
10 at bear baits; and
11 **WHEREAS** baits for bear hunting have been beneficial to pine martens and fishers by helping them
12 become re-established in the UP after they were reintroduced; and
13 **WHEREAS** coyotes and wolves also visit bear baits and benefit from the food they provide without
14 any known negative consequences; and
15 **WHEREAS** the DNR recommended a ban on the use of chocolate as bear bait during 2011 in
16 response to the death of the bear cub and raccoons; and
17 **WHEREAS** concerned sportsmen and women who belong to various organizations in the state,
18 including bear hunters, agreed that educating bear hunters who use bait about the dangers of using
19 chocolate was the best way to address this issue; and
20 **WHEREAS** hunters are the original conservationists and are concerned about the welfare of black
21 bears and other wildlife that visit bear baits; and
22 **WHEREAS** bear hunters who understand the dangers of chocolate to wildlife are willing to
23 voluntarily limit or eliminate the use of chocolate as bear bait; and
24 **WHEREAS** educating bear hunters about the threat that large quantities of chocolate pose to wildlife
25 is working since no deaths of wildlife to theobromine poisoning have been documented in Michigan
26 since 2010; and
27 **WHEREAS** small amounts of chocolate are often mixed with bear bait purchased in bulk; and
28 **WHEREAS** bear hunters can sometimes unknowingly use small amounts of chocolate that is mixed
29 with other baits; and
30 **WHEREAS** small amounts of chocolate do not pose a risk to wildlife; and

31 **WHEREAS** a total ban on chocolate as bear bait is unnecessary to protect wildlife from theobromine
32 poisoning since hunters are willing to limit their use of the substance on a voluntary basis and that
33 approach is working; and

34 **WHEREAS** a law banning the use of all chocolate as bear bait could pose a hardship for hunters by
35 subjecting them to being ticketed when small amounts of chocolate are used when those small
36 amounts do not pose a risk to wildlife; and

37 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that MUCC will work with affiliated organizations and the
38 DNR to educate bear hunters about the danger of using too much chocolate, and especially dark
39 baker's chocolate, as bear bait to eliminate the potential of bear bait harming any wildlife.

See Comments for #02 following Resolution #03, as these resolutions were on the same topic.

Proposed Resolution #03
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Michigan Hunting Dog Federation and Michigan Bear Hunters Association
Passed: MUCC District 20, February 3, 2016
Title: **CHOCOLATE IN BEAR BAIT**

1 **WHEREAS**, Chocolate contains theobromine, which can be toxic to bears and other wildlife in high
2 quantities; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) wildlife biologists have shown that
4 two raccoons (2002 and 2005) and one bear cub (2010) have been found dead from theobromine
5 poisoning in Michigan, related to chocolate in bear bait; and

6 **WHEREAS**, When examining this issue several years ago, our organizations agreed to do additional
7 education with our member bear hunters about the concern with using chocolate as a source of bait
8 rather than adopt a regulatory approach; and

9 **WHEREAS**, In 2014, four bears in New Hampshire died from chocolate toxicity near a 90-pound
10 bait pile containing chocolate. In May 2015, the New Hampshire Game and Fish Commission banned
11 the use of chocolate in bait. NOW,

12 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that MUCC work with the DNR, and the Natural Resources
13 Commission (NRC) to adopt a wildlife conservation order in 2017 that would ban the use of solid
14 chocolate in bear bait; and

15 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this regulation should balance the relative risk of solid
16 chocolate bait compared to bait with trace amounts of chocolate. As we understand, solid chocolate,
17 such as chocolate bars or chocolate-coated candy, is a much higher risk to wildlife compared to a
18 food source that might contain chocolate as a minor component as in trail mix.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #02 and #03: MUCC staff agree that chocolate in bear bait is a concern and have already been educating the public through media outreach to discourage the use of chocolate in bear bait. There are some bear hunters concerned with a full ban on chocolate in bear bait because granola, donuts, and trail mix are commonly used baits that may contain some amount of chocolate by volume and these small amounts are less of a concern overall. Baker's/dark chocolate have the highest concentration of theobromine, but any milk or dark chocolate can likely have an impact if consumed in a significant quantity compared to the size of the animal.

It is important to understand that the public, and specifically non-hunters, perception and acceptance is important to continuing the traditions of bear hunting; as the public learns more about the dangers of chocolate to wildlife, hunters who continue to use it despite the warnings will reduce public support for bear hunting over all.

DNR RESPONSE #02 and #03: The potential impacts of chocolate and associated theobromine on black bear and other wildlife species will be considered by Wildlife Division, Law Enforcement Division, the Bear Forum and other stakeholders prior to the 2017-18 bear regulations cycle. Based on those discussions and available literature, a recommendation will be prepared for the NRC in March of 2017. Information will be placed in the 2016 bear hunting digest in a continued effort to educate hunters about the possible adverse impacts of using chocolate as bait.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS ON #02 AND #03:

Wildlife Committee supports #02 (to discourage chocolate), unanimously.

Wildlife Committee supports #03 (to regulate chocolate) as amended: (2 oppose, 4 support)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this regulation should balance the relative risk of solid chocolate bait compared to bait with trace amounts of chocolate. As we understand, large quantities of chocolate ~~solid chocolate, such as chocolate bars or chocolate coated candy,~~ is a much higher risk to wildlife compared to a food source that might contain chocolate as a minor component as in trail mix.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #02 AND #03: Supports

Proposed Resolution # 04
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Tomahawk Archers
Passed: MUCC Region IV, February 21, 2016
Title: **URBAN BOWHUNTING AND DEER MANAGEMENT**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, the Michigan Deer Management Plan contains an action item for the development of an
2 urban/suburban deer management plan that provides specific, consistent guidelines and
3 recommendations for dealing with urban/suburban deer issues; and
4 **WHEREAS**, this urban/suburban deer management plan has not yet been created; and
5 **WHEREAS**, the Michigan Deer Management Plan contains an action item to pursue policies that
6 allow and encourage the use of recreational hunting, including archery hunting in urban/suburban
7 areas, to address urban/suburban deer issues; and
8 **WHEREAS**, communities such as Meridian Township have implemented successful organized
9 urban/suburban archery programs to manage urban/suburban deer issues; and
10 **WHEREAS**, in other communities, such as Ann Arbor, deer management has become a highly
11 controversial issue; and
12 **WHEREAS**, anti-hunting organizations such as the Humane Society of the United States have seized
13 upon the controversy and lack of wildlife management knowledge in urban/suburban communities to
14 advocate for the artificial drugging and sterilization of Michigan's free-ranging white-tailed deer
15 through the use of Porcine Zona Pellucida (PZP), for which the effects on animals (including humans)
16 which consume drugged deer is unknown; and

17 **WHEREAS**, the City of Ann Arbor has stated its intent to explore the option of using PZP on deer
18 with HSUS and the DNR in future years after approving a paid cull this year; and

19 **WHEREAS**, the elimination of the 150-yard no-hunting zone around buildings for bowhunting has
20 eliminated a barrier to urban bowhunting programs; and

21 **WHEREAS**, a lack of access is often cited as the top reason why people quit hunting; and

22 **WHEREAS**, urban and suburban bowhunting has the potential to attract new people to hunting by
23 providing access close to populated areas; and

24 **WHEREAS**, an average white-tailed deer can provide 30 to 50 pounds of free-range, organic, all-
25 natural, high-protein and low-fat venison which can be consumed or donated to local food banks.

26 NOW,

27 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
28 Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Natural Resources Commission, the Legislature,
29 local communities and affiliate clubs to develop a statewide urban/suburban deer management plan
30 per the Michigan Deer Management Plan; and

31 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the statewide urban/suburban deer management plan
32 emphasize bowhunting as the primary means of managing urban/suburban deer populations, and
33 provide guidance for establishing venison donation and archery proficiency programs; and

34 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the Michigan
35 Department of Natural Resources, the Natural Resources Commission, the Legislature and local
36 communities to ban the use of PZP or other sterilization techniques on Michigan's free-ranging game
37 species.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #04: There is a fundamental error in the DNR's comments that the local community should make the final decision on the management of the state's wildlife using any available option: the state's wildlife belong to all the people of the state, not just the local community, and are managed in trust for the citizens of the state by the DNR. The responsibility of managing the state's wildlife is that of the Department of Natural Resources, not individual city councils. Executive

Reorganization Order ERO 2011-1 states that *“The Department of Natural Resources shall protect, conserve and manage the natural resources of this state.”* Additionally, Act 451 of 1994, Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), states in section 324.40105: *“All animals found in this state, whether resident or migratory and whether native or introduced, are the property of the people of the state, and the taking of all animals shall be regulated by the department as provided by law.”*

Further, the application of a sterilization program using tranquilizers, whether surgical or using PZP, could only be conducted by the department under section 324.40111c, which states: *“a person other than the department shall not take game using a tranquilizer propelled from a bow or firearm.”* However, actually doing so would run counter to the department’s charge to *“conserve...the natural resources of this state.”* As defined in NREPA section 324.40103(9), *“conservation means the wise use of natural resources.”* The use of a white-tailed deer is the venison it provides. Sterilization of a game species, whether surgical or through the use of an artificial substance like PZP, and whether it was effective, cost-efficient or not, wastes that natural resource and prevents its wise use. The waste of a natural resource should not be an option provided to local elected officials by the department charged with the responsibility to conserve (“wisely use”) the state’s natural resources.

One of the most-cited challenges to participation in hunting is access, particularly near southern Michigan’s urban and suburban communities where deer conflicts are likely to arise. Teasing local communities with the potential that PZP or sterilization could ever be an option for them only leads to additional costs to the city in endless meetings exploring the option, increased divisiveness within those communities as anti-hunting organizations exploit the uncertainty by keeping sterilization “on the table,” and implicitly acknowledges the fallacy perpetuated by anti-hunting organizations that urban archery is unsafe, when there are no studies which would support that claim.

By leaving that door open, the department invites the controversy that arises when anti-hunting organizations push that option and are denied. This resolution would remove that option from the table, and leave the following options: doing nothing; non-lethal methods which do not involve the artificial sterilization of free-ranging game species; paid culling; or volunteer bowhunters in either a managed program or through the regular hunting season. It would also present a model to those communities of managed bowhunting options that could be tailored to the needs of the individual communities, which helps implement what is already in the state’s deer management plan to “pursue policies which encourage the use of recreational bowhunting to resolve urban/suburban deer issues.”

Sterilizing free-ranging game species is an overt anti-hunting action. Anti-hunting organizations, in particular the Humane Society of the United States, use PZP and sterilization specifically as an alternative to hunting. Their only purpose is to prevent hunting from occurring in any location, like urban and suburban communities, where it doesn’t currently occur. While the department may worry that it cannot tell those communities outright that sterilization is not an option because of public relations implications with those communities, **if** the department ever did cooperate with HSUS, the fallout that would create

with Michigan’s hunters, anglers and trappers could jeopardize their willingness to support future license fee proposals out of fear that their license dollars would be used to support anti-hunting programs like sterilization. This puts the department, “between a rock and a hard place.” By banning the use of PZP or other sterilization of game species outright, we can save the department from that dilemma.

DNR RESPONSE #04: The Department has scheduled internal meetings in April with staff to begin discussions on the creation of an urban deer management policy. This policy is anticipated to have components addressing many types of management, including recreational hunting, out of season culling, non-lethal approaches, and education. Urban deer management must be adaptable and flexible, as no two communities share the same exact circumstances. Though urban archery programs with skilled and qualified archers is highly desirable, can be effective at removing deer, and has little cost associated to the community, there are certain instances where an urban archery program may not work to remove the necessary number of deer needed to meet community goals. For this reason, all options of deer management must be considered and evaluated based on the community’s deer management goals and limitations. Additionally, though PZP and sterilization have not proven successful at reducing deer herds to appropriate levels in a free ranging environment, and impractical methods of deer management will not be pursued by the Department, we do not know where this field will progress in the future. Communities should have the entire suite of options available, and objectively determine which approach is best for their area. By having informed decision makers and evaluating all of the options available, the decision to pursue the proper approach can be supported by sound science and holds elected officials accountable for their actions in solving urban deer conflicts.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #04: Wildlife Committee supports, unanimously

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #04: Supports

Proposed Resolution # 05

Submitted by: Elden Montross, District 7 Chair
Passed: February 21, 2016, Region IV
Title: **NEUTRAL ON CROSSBOWS**

- 1 **WHEREAS** Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) has been on record since 1983 to support
- 2 *“the establishment of a crossbow season which would not conflict with existing archery seasons in*
- 3 *Michigan”*; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, for several decades in Michigan, crossbows were allowed only within firearm seasons
- 5 or with a permit for hunters with disabilities; and
- 6 **WHEREAS**, at least 24 states now have included the use of crossbows during archery hunting
- 7 seasons; and

8 **WHEREAS**, in 2010, Michigan’s Natural Resources Commission (NRC) adopted rules to allow
9 hunters age 10 and up to use a crossbow for the entire deer archery season, except for the late archery
10 deer season and muzzleloading season in the Upper Peninsula; and
11 **WHEREAS**, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ 2014 Deer Harvest
12 Survey, “about 174,558 hunters used a crossbow during the archery season, and they harvested about
13 59,266 deer with the crossbow. The number of archers using a crossbow increased significantly by
14 7% from 2013 (162,728 archers in 2013). Harvest of deer by archers using a crossbow was nearly
15 unchanged from [the previous] year (58,772 deer taken in 2013). About 30% of these archers using a
16 crossbow in 2014 harvested a deer with a crossbow”; and
17 **WHEREAS**, crossbow harvest now accounts for more than 50 percent of the total archery season
18 harvest statewide. NOW,
19 **THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED**, that MUCC adopt a position of neutrality on the use of
20 crossbows during the archery season as they have not resulted in any significant conflict to the
21 archery deer season.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #05:

Aside from the 1983 MUCC resolution referenced, MUCC’s most current policy (2010) is to oppose the full inclusion of crossbows until the NRC has completed three years of analysis on the 2009 regulations. The NRC amended the regulation in 2010 despite MUCC’s objection and the DNR released the evaluation report MUCC requested in January 2013, which can be found here [Michigan.gov/DNR](http://michigan.gov/DNR) → “Hunting & Trapping” → “Wildlife Surveys and Reports” → “2012 Crossbow Deer Hunter Survey Report” : http://michigan.gov/documents/dnr/FinalReport_crossbowSurvey_2013_01_25_410832_7.pdf

The question remains as to whether members expect that MUCC staff should continue to work to oppose crossbows within the existing archery season, even though they have now been fully included in the archery season for 6 deer seasons. This resolution would suggest that MUCC be neutral and not use resources to oppose the use of crossbows during archery season or try to work towards creating a standalone crossbow season.

The use of crossbows in Michigan has grown exponentially—from a small number of people with disability permits prior to 2009, to 18.9 percent of hunters (56,915 people) during the 2009 archery season, and now to 54.5 percent of deer hunters (174,558) in the 2014 archery season. All hunters combined during the archery season average 32% success, but crossbow hunters tend to have a

success rate 0.4 to 4.7 percentage points higher since 2010. However, this success rate is still lower than all deer hunters combined (40.6% in 2014).

DNR RESPONSE #05: Data from other states has shown that crossbows are effective tools in introducing youth hunters and retaining older hunters in the archery season. The popularity of crossbows has grown in states where they have been incorporated into their archery season. With no statewide impact observed by including crossbows into the archery season, the Department does not anticipate restricting the use of crossbows in the future.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #05: Wildlife Committee opposes (1 support, 5 oppose). This issue is a reoccurring item that has many issues indirectly as well as directly tied to it, neutrality on such a topic is not good policy.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #05: Supports

Proposed Resolution #06
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Richard P. Smith, MUCC Life Member
Passed: MUCC Region I, February 6, 2016
Title: **SUPPORT FOR LEGALIZING CROSSBOWS DURING LATE ARCHERY SEASON IN THE UP**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, crossbows were legalized for use during Michigan’s archery deer seasons in 2009 to
2 increase participation in these seasons, especially among senior citizens who either had difficulty
3 continuing to hunt with or were unable to hunt with vertical bows; and
4 **WHEREAS** crossbows were subsequently prohibited for use during the late archery season in the UP
5 because they were labeled as “100-yard weapons” and considered as effective as muzzleloading
6 rifles, which is inaccurate; and
7 **WHEREAS** a prohibition on the use of crossbows during the late archery deer season only in the UP
8 reduces hunting opportunity and recreation, which is counter to the reason crossbows were legalized
9 in the first place; and
10 **WHEREAS** there is no valid biological reason to prohibit UP hunters from using crossbows during
11 the late archery season; and

12 **WHEREAS** a test conducted by Hick’s Outdoors in Clio that compared crossbows with compound
13 bows at various ranges showed that compound bows are more effective at longer ranges than
14 crossbows; and
15 **WHEREAS** the late season archery deer hunt in the UP results in the harvest of small numbers of
16 deer compared to other seasons; and
17 **WHEREAS** the use of crossbows during the late archery deer season in the UP would increase
18 hunting opportunity and recreation without having a significant impact on the UP deer herd; and
19 **WHEREAS** MUCC is supposed to encourage increased hunting opportunity over reduced hunting
20 opportunity when the resource is not negatively impacted. NOW,
21 **THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED** that MUCC supports the legalization of crossbows during
22 the late archery deer season in the UP like the rest of the state and will work with the DNR and NRC
23 to try to accomplish that goal.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #06: There were 7,610 deer harvested in the 2014 Archery season in the Upper Peninsula, 3,624 (47 percent) by crossbow hunters. This accounts for 14 percent of the deer harvest in the Upper Peninsula that is done by crossbows in archery season (of a total 25,961 deer in the Upper Peninsula in all seasons combined in 2014).

At the time that the crossbow regulation was approved, there was concern from Upper Peninsula sportsmen that adding additional pressure in the winter season when deer are herded up would negatively impact the deer population. People who have a disability can easily obtain a permit to use a crossbow in this late season, if needed.

MUCC’s current policy (2010) is to oppose the full inclusion of crossbows until the NRC has completed three years of analysis on the 2009 regulations. The NRC amended the regulation in 2010 despite our objection and the DNR released their report in January 2013.

DNR RESPONSE #06: The deer herd in the Upper Peninsula (UP) has been significantly impacted by a number of factors over the past couple of years. With this, the Department and NRC have responded by further restricting the take of deer to help assist in herd recovery. Last year, the antlerless option was removed from archers, and this year, the NRC is asking for an evaluation of a “no spike” rule in the UP to further restrict harvest. With these changes and proposed changes, it may seem contradictory to liberalize crossbow use in the UP. Though the impacts of allowing crossbows in the late archery season in the UP are likely to be very minimal, the timing of this change appears more appropriate once the herd has shown signs of recovery.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #06: Wildlife Committee opposes (4-2 vote). Protecting the resource at a time of high vulnerability with migration, snow fall etc. is of concern.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #06: Opposes

Proposed Resolution #07
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Tim Kobasic, Region I Director at Large, on behalf of Hiawathaland Trail Association

Passed: MUCC Region I, February 6, 2016

Title: **TO SUPPORT ATV/ORV APPROPRIATE USE WITHIN THE MICHIGAN DESIGNATED MOTORIZED TRAIL SYSTEM AND GROUSE ENHANCEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROGRAM AREA IN THE UPPER PENINSULA.**

1 **WHEREAS**, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation,
2 protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current
3 and future generations. The DNR strives to:

- 4 • Protect natural and cultural resources.
- 5 • Ensure sustainable recreation use and enjoyment.
- 6 • Enable strong natural resource-based economies.
- 7 • Improve and build strong relationships and partnerships.
- 8 • Foster effective business practices and good governance; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Michigan offers many trail riding opportunities. Michigan's public Off-Road Vehicle
10 (ORV) trail/route system provides four types of riding opportunities: motorcycle trails, all terrain
11 vehicle (ATV) trails, ORV routes which are open to ORVs of all sizes including Secretary of State
12 licensed vehicles, and scramble areas; and,

13 **WHEREAS**, with the help of hunters and partners, the DNR continues to develop a series of
14 intensively managed, walk-in access ruffed grouse hunting areas across the northern Lower and
15 Upper Peninsulas. The areas are called GEMS - Grouse Enhanced Management Sites, and are
16 managed for young forests, primarily aspen; and,

17 **WHEREAS**, Michigan United Conservation Clubs was founded in 1937 with a simple purpose:
18 harness the combined strength of Michigan's outdoors community to protect conservation from
19 politics; and,
20 **WHEREAS**, we must recognize that there is no recreational superiority within the State of Michigan;
21 and,
22 **WHEREAS**, it remains the obligation of all conservationists and recreational users of our natural
23 resources to mutually engrain the safe and ethical use; and,
24 **WHEREAS**, there are times when resources and recreational opportunities will overlap and
25 compromise for use must be employed; and,
26 **WHEREAS**, a 1.8 mile segment of gravel road within the GEMS in the Gwinn area of Marquette
27 County does share land use and is open for the motorized sports of snowmobile and ATV/ORV and is
28 under consideration for designation as a multi-use route; and,
29 **WHEREAS**, that special efforts regarding using slower speed, reduced noise and not going off (trail)
30 route is of utmost importance and should be considered in not pursuing or harassing wildlife; and,
31 **WHEREAS**, special signage should be installed prior to and along this designated route system as a
32 pilot program to enhance and emphasize importance that riders are approaching and within a game
33 management program area; and,
34 **WHEREAS**, this multi-use adaptation of our natural resources would serve to increase awareness
35 mutual respect between recreational disciplines.
36 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC)
37 endorses and recommends that the 1.8 mile segment of gravel road with the Gwinn, Marquette
38 County GEMS be made a designated route as a pilot program to test the compatibility of the multi-use
39 recreational disciplines, with inclusion of appropriate signage; and,
40 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that MUCC endorses this pilot program be reviewed after the third
41 year of use to make final determination as to the success or failure of the merged use.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #07: This issue is being re-evaluated by the Department of Natural Resources, with additional options expected by June 30, 2016. The County Road section in question has been used by ORV's since 1996, and while it travels near a GEMS trail, it does not travel on the actual GEMS trail. The section it traverses is, and would continue, to be accessible by motor vehicle traffic. The signage enabled by a route designation may result in slower and quieter ORV traffic.

Additionally, the alternate route would require a new trail be cut through fish and game purchased lands, including wetland mitigation, which could result in more total motorized traffic disruption, particularly if the county road is still open to motorized traffic. If this resolution is approved, however, it will be important to distinguish the unique nature of this location to avoid creating a "pandora's box."

While there may not be a "recreational superiority," in the State of Michigan, there is certainly a recreational superiority of hunting, fishing and trapping on lands purchased and managed with hunter-angler funds, particularly through Pittman-Robertson and Fish and Game funds, and activities which conflict and impair hunting, fishing, and trapping can and should be restricted where necessary.

However, in this unique situation, a compromise such as suggested by the resolution, or a similar one that may be suggested by the department through its re-evaluation, may be the best way to minimize disruption to hunting activities and game habitat in this location.

DNR RESPONSE #07: The Department is currently reviewing this topic and is working to develop options that will potentially resolve this matter.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #07: Wildlife Committee supports, unanimously. The trail is existing and there is concern about closing off access. Extra signage explaining what you are in while on this trail as well as rules is recommended.

Proposed Resolution # 08
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Straits Area Sportsmens Club
Passed: MUCC Region I, February 6, 2016
Title: **COYOTE BOUNTY**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, the coyote is one of the main predators of whitetail deer, including fawns; and
- 2 **WHEREAS**, many hunters feel there are too many coyotes in Michigan and if given an incentive
- 3 would be more willing to hunt them. NOW,
- 4 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
- 5 Michigan Department of Natural Resources to start a bounty on coyotes in Michigan.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #08: After creating the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and passing the Bottle Bill in 1976, the next major undertaking for Michigan United Conservation Clubs

was to eliminate the coyote bounty. MUCC worked on numerous pieces of legislation over multiple legislative sessions which would pass the House of Representatives and run into a road block in the Senate Natural Resources Committee when chair Joe Mack (D-Ironwood) always blocked them. After he was stripped from his chairmanship of that committee, the bill finally passed in 1979 and the bounty was eliminated. In his Legislative Report in Michigan Out-of-Doors, then-MUCC Executive Director Tom Washington wrote about why MUCC worked so hard to repeal the coyote bounty:

“Passage of the coyote bounty repeal has long been one of the principle goals of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, which for years has campaigned against bounty payments as a waste of sportsmen’s license dollars and a biologically unsound approach to wildlife management.”

In the current climate, we could add to that list the negative public relations it would create for predator management in the general public. At the April Natural Resources Commission meeting, the NRC approved year-round coyote hunting, adding an additional three months to coyote season, as well as the use of #3 and #4 buckshot at night for coyotes. With this additional management tool, hunters concerned about coyote impacts on deer in their localized areas have ample opportunity to hunt coyotes.

DNR RESPONSE #08: Bounties have been demonstrated to be an unsuccessful way to reduce coyote numbers. Typically, bounties pay those that already intend to harvest coyotes and do not increase harvest. Instead, funds are reallocated from more beneficial programs such as habitat work which can positively impact wildlife populations. The Department does not support the use of bounties. However the Department, at the request of the NRC, has brought forward some proposed changes that would liberalize harvest opportunities for coyotes- allowing for greater options for those that have concerns about coyote populations to be able to address those concerns.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #08: Wildlife Committee supports as amended, (4-2 vote) (adding a new Whereas after line 3 and Amending Lines 4-5)

WHEREAS, WOLVES ARE HAVING AN IMPACT ON DEER AS WELL YET THERE ARE NO LEGAL MANAGEMENT OPTIONS. NOW,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, **NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION AND MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE** to start a bounty on coyotes in **THE UPPER PENINSULA OF Michigan.**

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #08: Opposes

Proposed Resolution #09
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Chris Kettler, Michigan Trappers & Predator Callers Association
Passed: MUCC District 20, February 3, 2016
Title: **NIGHTTIME PREDATOR HUNTING WITH CENTERFIRE FIREARMS**

1 **WHEREAS**, MUCC has long supported controlling the coyote population in Michigan by passing
2 resolutions allowing the use of #3 & 4 buckshot at night (unanimous vote 2013), expanded hound
3 hunting opportunity at night (2012), and the taking of coyotes during deer season (2010); and
4 **WHEREAS**, current Michigan regulations allow centerfire firearms for predator hunting during the
5 day but restrict night hunting to “only a bow and arrow, crossbow, a rimfire firearm .22 caliber or
6 smaller, or shotgun with loads other than buckshot, slug, or cut shell”; and
7 **WHEREAS**, the common rimfire ammunition (.22LR, 22 mag, & 17 HMR) is adequate for small
8 furbearers but not effective at quickly killing a coyote. These animals often run off making them
9 difficult to find, especially at night; and
10 **WHEREAS**, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, & Wisconsin all allow the use of centerfire firearms at night for
11 the taking of coyotes. Illinois rules state “Coyotes may be hunted on private property using dogs,
12 archery devices, any type and caliber of handgun, any type of legal rifle including large capacity
13 semiautomatic rifles, and shotguns using any type of shell”. Indiana rules state “There are no
14 restrictions on hunting hours or firearms for hunting fox and coyote”. Ohio rules state ‘Handguns:
15 any caliber, Rifles: any caliber, Shotguns: 10ga and smaller’. Wisconsin rules allow any rifle,
16 handgun, or shotgun with only barrel length restrictions; and
17 **WHEREAS**, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, & Wisconsin have no reports of increased poaching activity,
18 safety issues, or property damage attributed to night time coyote hunting with centerfire firearms;
19 now
20 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) work
21 with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to
22 remove the nighttime centerfire firearm restriction and permit their use for predator hunting anytime,
23 day and night.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #09: Centerfire rifles are a legitimate tool utilized for nighttime predator hunting by hunters in most states surrounding Michigan. No compelling arguments have been presented as to why Michigan should not be among them. Centerfire cartridges expand hunters’

effective range and ensure a quick, clean kill. As with any hunting situation, the duty and responsibility to identify their target and what's behind it remains that of the hunter.

DNR RESPONSE #09: The Department opposes this resolution as proposed because it would create an unenforceable situation and for safety reasons. Allowing it, hunters may be able to stay afield after legal daytime hunting hours and claim they are "nighttime predator hunting." Centerfire rifles increase the maximum effective range in which to take game; however, at night a hunter can only effectively shoot what they can see. A centerfire rifle will not increase a hunter's field of vision; yet will travel much further than a rimfire or shotgun. This will create a dangerous situation as hunters will not be able to see beyond their target.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #09: Wildlife Committee supports, unanimously

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #09: Supports

Proposed Resolution #10
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Robert Pattison, St. Joseph County Conservation Club
Passed: MUCC Region III, February 20, 2016
Title: **YOUTH HUNTER SUPERVISION**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, the current law states that youth hunters who have completed a hunter safety course
2 must be accompanied by an adult hunting, which is the same criteria for an apprentice youth hunter
3 who have never held a gun; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, the word "accompany" is defined to mean "to go along with and while staying within a
5 distance from the person that permits uninterrupted, unaided visual and auditory communication";
6 and
- 7 **WHEREAS**, the current law does not acknowledge the different developmental levels that youth
8 hunters are at, and there is no mechanism that relates these levels to the amount of supervision
9 necessary; and
- 10 **WHEREAS**, treating these classes of youth hunters equally is illogical; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Michigan has three categories of youth hunters: youth who are eligible for the mentored
12 youth hunting program; youth who are eligible for an apprentice license; and, youth who have
13 completed a certified hunter safety program; and

14 **WHEREAS**, all three of these categories require adult supervision; and

15 **WHEREAS**, the current law recognizes the importance and value of supervision with a younger,
16 inexperienced hunter, but does not recognize the importance and value of higher education and
17 experience in youth hunters. NOW,

18 **THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED**, that Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) work with
19 the Michigan Legislature, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Natural Resources
20 Commission (NRC) to institute the following: On private land only, a minor who is at least 14 years
21 old shall be permitted to hunt within a distance no greater than 660 feet from the parent or legal
22 guardian which permits uninterrupted electronic communication and allows the parent or legal
23 guardian to come to the immediate aid of the youth. The youth hunter **MUST** have completed all of
24 the following criteria:

- 25 • has successfully completed a certified hunter safety program,
- 26 • has been properly licensed and been supervised hunting for at least 20 hours in each of the
27 immediately preceding two hunting seasons
- 28 • the parent or legal guardian of the youth hunter must submit a signed affidavit at the time of
29 the youth hunter's license is purchased stating that the applicant has completed at least 20 hours
30 of supervised hunting in each of the immediately preceding two hunting seasons AND that the
31 youth hunter was properly licensed in the immediate two preceding seasons.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #10:

Current law requires that:

- an apprentice adult hunter must be accompanied by someone 21 or older who possesses the same hunting license,
- an apprentice hunter 10-16 must be accompanied by their parent, guardian, or someone designated by the parent or guardian, and
- a hunter-safety certified hunter 10-16 must be accompanied by an adult 18 and over.

In each instance above, the term “accompany” means the same as indicated in the resolution, while a mentored youth under 9 must be within arm’s length of the mentor who is 21 or older, has hunting experience and who possesses the same hunting license.

This resolution would allow a young, but more experienced hunter hunt a little further from the adult on private land only as long as they were in electronic (cell phone or radio) communications. This is a hunter who is: 14 or older, hunted at least 20 hours during the previous 2 years with an adult, has completed hunter safety, and has a parent or guardian give signed permission with an affidavit confirming these qualifications. Currently, even hunting on either side of a clump of trees is not legal for a youth hunter and parent to do because the visual communications are impeded. This may reduce the quality of hunting for the youth hunter and may make a parent or guardian choose between siblings on who gets to participate.

In terms of the license purchase at the retail location, each time you sign your own hunting, fishing, or fur harvesting license (or that of your youth hunter if you are a parent or guardian) you are already signing an affidavit that you or that youth qualifies to hunt according to state law and this resolution would not be asking for anything more than that to ensure these requirements are met.

DNR RESPONSE #10: The Department opposes this resolution as it would be difficult to enforce and will cause increased safety concerns. Electronic communication can fail due to loss of power (batteries) or weak signal strength. 660 feet is well over two hundred yards which depending on the terrain, adults could not come to the immediate aid of the youth. There would be increased costs to create an affidavit for the adults to affirm the youth had the required time in the field. The Department has problems with license agents obtaining all required information from license purchasers and requiring more information may add to that problem. [Requiring 20 hours of hunting experience does mean the youth experienced the emotions of seeing or taking game.]

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #10: Wildlife Committee supports. They appreciated the emphasis on private land only with an outlined criteria the youth will need to have completed. Age should not be the deciding factor as an individual’s ability.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #10: Opposes

Proposed Resolution #11
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Millard H. Holton, MUCC IM Representative, Region III
 Passed: MUCC Region III, February 20, 2016
 Title: **ALLOW HUNTERS TO POSSESS AND USE MULTIPLE TYPE LEGAL WEAPONS WHILE HUNTING MORE THAN ONE LEGAL SPECIES DURING OVERLAPPING SEASONS**

1 **WHEREAS**, the 2015 Michigan Hunting and Trapping Digest explains each hunting season and
2 what weapons can be used, or those prohibited in each; and
3 **WHEREAS**, during the archery deer seasons, it is unlawful to carry afield a non CPL pistol,
4 revolver, or other firearm while bow hunting for deer (page 20); and
5 **WHEREAS**, the archery seasons overlap with several seasons where firearms are permitted in the
6 same habitat, including small game (cottontail rabbits, snowshoe hare, squirrel, woodchuck,
7 pheasants, grouse, and woodcock) as well as, red and grey fox, raccoon, coyote and numerous species
8 with no closed seasons (pages, 4-6); and
9 **WHEREAS**, the firearm deer hunter may carry afield [during the firearm deer season] a bow and
10 arrow, crossbow and firearm (page 20); and
11 **WHEREAS**, both a Spring and September turkey hunter can legally possess a shotgun, bow or
12 crossbow at the same time; and
13 **WHEREAS**, during the Mentored Youth Hunting Season, "The mentor is limited to two hunting
14 devices (shotgun, rifle, bow or crossbow,)" (page 26); and
15 **WHEREAS**, the hunting areas are full of hunters carrying CPL approved firearms while hunting deer
16 with archery equipment or crossbows during the archery seasons; and
17 **WHEREAS**, a deer combo license allows a hunter to use both kill tags in either the firearms season,
18 the muzzleloader season, the archery seasons, or use one license in each of these seasons (page, 31);
19 and
20 **WHEREAS**, "a crossbow can be used during any season in which a firearm is allowed" (page 18);
21 and
22 **WHEREAS**, it is illegal to possess a crossbow and a muzzleloader at the same time in the field,
23 during the December, muzzleloader season (In the Upper Peninsula, December muzzleloader season,

24 crossbows are banned), even though both weapons are legal to use in these overlapping, late archery,
25 and muzzleloader seasons (page 18); and
26 **WHEREAS**, it is illegal to possess a crossbow and a firearm at the same time, in the field, during the
27 overlapping, late archery deer season with the late, antlerless firearm, deer season (page 17, 2015
28 Michigan Antlerless Deer Digest); and
29 **WHEREAS**, the fields, woodlots and waters are full of hunters with all kinds and calibers of firearms
30 from Mid-September until January 1st and later, including each archery deer season on both private
31 and public lands. This presents ample opportunities to violate, if one is inclined to do so; and
32 **WHEREAS**, recent, substantially increased poaching fines and penalties should reduce any perceived
33 rise in game violations; and
34 **WHEREAS**, allowing a hunter to hunt multiple species with more than one type of legal weapon and
35 ammunition, in overlapping seasons would increase hunting opportunities, hunter participation and
36 hunter satisfaction, as well as, boost legal harvesting success, with minimal harm to the Natural
37 Resources. **NOW**,
38 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) work with
39 the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and
40 frame a Wildlife Order that would eliminate certain, conflicting or contradictory statements and
41 confusion from the Hunting Digests, along with removing the prohibition against using more than one
42 legal weapon while hunting multiple species during overlapping seasons; especially when hunting
43 deer.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #11: There are certainly scenarios wherein this proposal makes sense: for example an archery deer hunter wanting to shoot at a squirrel during an early October bow hunt, provided he/she has hunter orange and a field point. Others are not so simple. Overlaying the rules of several seasons and the appropriate method and manner of take attendant to each creates a potentially complicated scenario for the hunter.

DNR RESPONSE #11: The Department opposes because it would create unenforceable violations. Hunter orange is required while hunting with a firearm during some seasons and would not be

required during other seasons; making it hard to prove the ‘intent’ of the hunter. License violations would become impossible to enforce as well as the method of take. An example would be an “archery hunter” in October hunting over a bait pile or deer run claiming he is small game hunting. Broad heads are very easy to conceal as well as the arrows that are attached. Same goes for small game loads vs. buckshot in the quiet period, or archery season. More trophy deer would succumb to “temptation by otherwise legal” hunters. License sales may decrease as some would “wait for a kill” to purchase the deer or turkey licenses and just buy the base license. We see this trend already. This proposal could possibly reduce the revenue brought in by deer license sales. Hunter orange violations would increase significantly, but prove very difficult to prosecute. Safety violations would increase as well. This proposal, as written would create conflict with the current Federal waterfowl regulations, in which only one firearm or bow may be used and possessed. It would impact the 5-day quiet period as “rabbit hunters with centerfire rifles” would increase in numbers and would be impossible to bring to justice. Hunting related accidents may increase as unsafe tree-stand hunters would now be carrying more than one weapon into their stands, creating more chance of falls, injury and even death. Trespass issues may increase as well. Many HAP lands and other private holdings allow only certain types of hunting and this would create excuses for hunters to use different firearms, etc. to target non-allowed species. This could also reduce the participation by landowners in the HAP or CFA programs. One of the purposes of creating rules is to have them simple enough so the general public can understand them. This proposal simply does not do that.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #11: Wildlife Committee was split. There are pros and cons both ways; they may support small game at the same time, but the conflicting rules around hunter orange, baiting, and elevated platforms are tricky to navigate with changes to the hunting device.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #11: Supports

Proposed Resolution #12
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Millard H. Holton, MUCC IM Representative, Regent III, District 6
Passed: MUCC Region III, February 20, 2016
Title: **CHANGING THE STARTING DATE OF THE EARLY SPRING TURKEY SEASON**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, the Early Spring Turkey Season currently starts on the Monday that falls between the
- 2 17th and the 23rd of April; and
- 3 **WHEREAS**, most hunters are either working, attending school or college, therefore are not able to
- 4 participate on the opening day of Turkey Season without absorbing loss of wages or incurring other
- 5 penalties; and

6 **WHEREAS**, adding two more weekend days to the Early Spring Turkey Season in Unit ZZ (for a 16
7 day season) would not harm the Natural Resources, nor would it negatively impact the breeding
8 process; and

9 **WHEREAS**, in many years the starting date backed up to Saturday, would not cause the season to
10 start any earlier than it presently does in the Early Turkey Season of Unit ZZ; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the Early Spring Turkey Season experiences many dramatic, unpredictable shifts in the
12 weather patterns from year-to-year; and

13 **WHEREAS**, there is much support among turkey hunters for changing the season opening week day
14 from Monday to the previous Saturday in Unit ZZ which would include three weekends; and

15 **WHEREAS**, there are thousands of left over, Early Spring Turkey Licenses (in Unit ZZ) unapplied
16 for each year; and

17 **WHEREAS**, increasing the weekend, hunting days from 4 to 6, could recruit more hunters,
18 especially those who are pressed for available time; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Hunt Unit ZZ contains large numbers of turkeys; and

20 **WHEREAS**, the starting date of the Fall Turkey Season was changed (backed up) from the 1st
21 Monday in October to the 15th of September without any perceived harm to the resource (hunters
22 can harvest a turkey per day of either sex, for 60 days or until the quotas are met (4,500 in Unit YY)).

23 **NOW**

24 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) work with
25 the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and
26 frame a Wildlife Order that would change the opening day of the Early Spring Turkey Season from
27 Monday to the appropriate, previous Saturday of April in Unit ZZ that would increase the season to
28 16 days.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #12: In October of 2014, the MI DNR Wildlife Division published the results of “Michigan Turkey Hunter Opinion Survey: Why Frequent License Buyers Did Not Buy a License in 2014.” That survey indicated that the primary reason turkey hunting

license buying declined were due to a lack of time because of family commitments (27%) or work commitments (22%). The 2014 Spring Turkey Hunter Survey indicated that spring turkey hunting participation has declined by 19% since 2004. The DNR's comments on this resolution identify that most turkey hunters are happy with their turkey hunting experience, which the data does show. However, the inevitable conclusion from the trend data is that at least 1 out of every 5 are not satisfied enough to continue turkey hunting. Prominent turkey hunting organizations are extremely valuable partners and should be celebrated for their incredible success in leading wild turkey conservation efforts. Without question, they represent the most ardent of turkey hunters for whom a Monday opener would not be considered a barrier to participation. For the more casual turkey hunter-who still value a quality hunting experience-the data would show that it does. It is telling that of the available Spring Turkey Hunter surveys, the question of a weekend opener versus a Monday opener has never been presented as a question to the turkey hunting public. In those instances where a regulatory decision does not have a landscape level population impact, and this appears to be one of those instances, our regulations and policies should tend to favor expanded opportunity.

DNR RESPONSE #12: The Department conducts extensive evaluations of turkey hunter opinions through turkey hunter mail surveys, workgroup meetings and personal interactions. Through this process, turkey hunters have helped to develop the present turkey management goals and season framework. Current spring season opening dates were established to occur after the majority of hens had been bred and as early in spring as possible (April 17) without impacting the turkey population. Turkey hunting organizations working with the Legislature, NRC and Department have a long tradition of supporting a Monday opener. Michigan ranks 7th in the nation for turkey harvest and is acknowledged as having some of the highest quality turkey hunting in the country. Turkey hunter surveys indicate that the majority of turkey hunters are happy with their turkey hunting experience. Spring turkey hunting season regulations are currently being reviewed for the next the 3-year stabilized regulations cycle (2017-2019). Field staff will review this topic when they develop future recommendations.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #12: Wildlife Committee supports

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #12: Supports

Proposed Resolution #13
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Macatawa Bay Waterfowl Association and Jack VanRhee, MUCC Statewide Vice President
Passed: MUCC Region III, February 20, 2016
Title: **WATERFOWL HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES ON COUNTY PARKS IN MICHIGAN**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, many counties in Michigan have parks in rural areas of the state; and
- 2 **WHEREAS**, Many of these parks have an abundance of water in the form of lakes, rivers and ponds;
- 3 and

4 **WHEREAS**, These water resources attract a large variety of waterfowl as resident species and during
5 migration flights; and
6 **WHEREAS**, Many of these parks can provide additional opportunities for waterfowl hunting. NOW,
7 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with country
8 parks commissions and boards and any other appropriate county officials to expand the opportunities
9 for waterfowl hunting on county parks in the state of Michigan.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #13: MUCC has always supported local units of government in their efforts to allow all types of hunting on their managed park lands or natural areas. There are several instances where counties or townships have allowed some form of hunting, including waterfowl hunting at county owned parks, even if it is more heavily regulated or restricted compared to state or private lands. As we understand it, local units of government (and those that provide insurance for them) have been concerned about the liability of allowing the public to hunt on their lands because they do not receive the same protections under state law as the Department of Natural Resources does related to recreation and hunting. This may be a barrier we could reduce or remove through legislation that would impact hunting on local properties statewide. It would require significant support from our MUCC members to be able to reach out to every local county. To accomplish this, we might also seek to work with other statewide associations like the Michigan Association of Counties and M-Parks to help provide outreach to their members.

DNR RESPONSE #13: The Department is committed to increasing waterfowl hunting participation and is fully supportive of a MUCC initiative to work with counties to provide increased opportunities for waterfowl hunting.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #13: Wildlife Committee supports unanimously, as amended (addition after Line 9)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT MUCC EXPLORE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES TO OFFER THE SAME LIABILITY PROTECTION THAT STATE GOVERNMENT HAS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THAT ALLOW HUNTING, FISHING, AND TRAPPING.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #13: Supports

Proposed Resolution #14
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Jim Pryce, Region IV Vice President
Passed: MUCC Region IV, February 21, 2016
Title: **INCREASED PENALTIES FOR HARASSMENT OF ANGLERS, HUNTERS,
AND TRAPPERS**

1 **WHEREAS**, Sportsmen and sportswomen in Michigan have the right to enjoy their sport free from
2 unreasonable and deliberate interference from those opposed to fishing, hunting, or trapping as a
3 legitimate use of public land and other natural resources; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Michigan law prohibits individuals from obstructing or interfering with the lawful
5 taking of game and fish. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) supports fishing, hunting and
6 trapping as a legitimate form of recreation and as a useful tool in the management of game and fish.
7 Michigan Conservation Officers are committed to protecting anglers, hunters and trappers from the
8 disruption of their outdoor endeavors; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Harassment of an outdoorsperson enjoying their sport is only a misdemeanor offense
10 and harassers are not deterred. NOW,

11 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, work with the
12 Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) work to enact stiffer penalties against harassers,
13 with the penalties to be:

- 14 • a first time offender be imprisoned for not more than 93 days and be fined a minimum of \$1000
15 plus the costs of prosecution.
- 16 • 2 time offender be punished with a 9 month imprisonment and a fine of \$3,500, plus the costs of
17 prosecution.
- 18 • A 3rd time or more offender would receive 1 year imprisonment, a fine of \$ 10,000, plus the costs of
19 the prosecution.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #14:

The current angler/hunter harassment law (MCL 324.40112(4)) calls for a misdemeanor punishable by:

- 1st offense: imprisonment for not more than 93 days or a fine of not less than \$500.00 or more than \$1,000.00, or both, and the costs of prosecution.
- 2nd or more: imprisonment for not more than 1 year or a fine of not less than \$1,000.00 or more than \$2,500.00, or both, and the costs of prosecution.

In addition to the penalties, any permit or license issued by the department authorizing the individual to take animals or fish shall be revoked.

Increasing fines have been acceptable in recent years to the Michigan legislature on poaching, though we did meet more resistance than expected. The civil fines in Michigan all go to the libraries so they are a deterrent and cannot be seen as a way to raise revenue (which is a common misperception). A DNR presentation from 2010 indicated that they have averaged almost 6 hunter harassment arrests each year from 1995-2010, and angler harassment averages 1 arrest each year. We have requested and hope to have updated information in time for Convention on the number of convictions under the Michigan Hunter/Angler Harassment Laws more recently.

DNR RESPONSE #14: The Department opposes as written because increasing penalties may be perceived as too punitive, as some courts are not currently assessing jail time, fines, and license revocations per statute because they feel they are too severe already. Fines would be greater than other second offenses that have potentially increased safety concerns (i.e., proposed second offense hunter, angler harassment vs. second offense OUIL).

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #14: Wildlife Committee supports unanimously, as amended (Line 12)

with the *MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE* Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #14: Supports

Proposed Resolution # 15
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Jim Pryce, MUCC Region IV VP
Passed: MUCC Region IV February 21, 2016
Title: **PURPLE PAINT TRESPASSING LAW**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, Michigan landowners are continually placing and replacing No Trespassing signs
- 2 because trespassers do not want to acknowledge them, tear them down, or use the signs as target
- 3 practice; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, people hunting or fishing without landowner's consent is a common issue; and
- 5 **WHEREAS**, signs are easily taken down; and
- 6 **WHEREAS**, other states have enacted the "Purple Paint Law." In 1989 this was incorporated in
- 7 Arkansas and currently 8 other states have this law which allows landowners, as an alternative to a
- 8 No Trespassing sign, to use a purple vertical paint line of at least 8 inches long and 1 inch wide and
- 9 between 3 to 5 feet from the ground to make it easily visible. The No Trespassing purple holds the

10 same weight and same law violations as a No Trespassing sign. It pays to know what the color purple
11 means, as a first-degree trespassing charge is a misdemeanor in most states; and
12 **WHEREAS**, the purple paint has been chosen because most color blind people can see purple and
13 paint on a post or a tree is much more difficult to take off and will save landowners money. NOW,
14 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
15 Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Natural Resources Commission, and
16 the Michigan Legislature if needed to enact the “Purple Paint Law”; and
17 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that an explanatory sign could be included with the purple stripe
18 for one year until the new law is securely in place.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #15: This option was proposed a decade ago as SB 499 of 2005. The bill passed the Senate 35 to 2 and passed out of the House Committee on Outdoor Recreation, but was never taken up for a vote by the full House of Representatives. The Legislative Analysis written of the bill at the time contained supporting and opposing arguments that remain largely unchanged, reprinted verbatim here:

Supporting Argument *Due to the State's abundant natural resources, outdoor recreation constitutes a significant component of the economy. Trespassing, however, is a considerable problem that contributes to the erosion of support for activities such as hunting in Michigan. Currently, property owners may indicate that their land is not open to recreational activities by constructing fences or other physical barriers, or posting "no trespassing" signs. These methods may be costly, however, and geography sometimes makes them impractical. Additionally, signs frequently must be replaced because they are torn down or damaged. Timber companies typically discourage entry by marking property boundaries with different colors of paint, which reportedly lasts two to 10 years. Paint markings could be similarly effective for landowners who do not want others entering their property to hunt, fish, or engage in other recreational activities. Presumably, this option would help reduce the number of trespassing violations occurring in Michigan.*

Response: *Although the bill would provide property owners with an easy, inexpensive way to mark their land, there are several potential problems that should be taken into consideration. The paint would fade over time, which could lead to complications in law enforcement. Additionally, allowing the use of paint would make it easier for a person to mark someone else's property against entry. Apparently, some hunters engage in this unsportsmanlike practice in order to deny others access to land, and some animal rights activists and others who oppose hunting also post "no trespassing" signs on land that does not belong to them. In addition, if property changed hands and the new owner did not want the paint marks, he or she could have trouble removing them.*

Opposing Argument *The bill could result in the degradation of the State's landscapes, the preservation of which is critical to promoting tourism. The bill also could lead people who were unaware of the purple paint's meaning, particularly those from other states, as well as colorblind individuals, to break the law unintentionally.*

Response: *First, the bill would not require landowners to use purple paint, but simply would allow them to do so. Also, since the paint would be used by private property owners, it would not detract from the appearance of public land. Furthermore, the other states that allow the use of paint markings have engaged in comprehensive campaigns to alert the public as to the paint's meaning. They have reported no significant problems related to inadvertent trespass violations, despite the widespread use of the paint by property owners. Evidently, the number of poachers caught in those states has increased since the laws allowing the use of purple paint were enacted. The DNR could engage in similar public awareness efforts in Michigan to ensure that only true violators were penalized.*

DNR RESPONSE #15: There would risk of trees being illegally marked on public land, mismarked property lines, private land that was properly marked but now enrolled into Commercial Forest Act, and property sold and no longer private land, etc. The Department does not have the resources to check if the land has been correctly marked, trees possibly cut down or painted over because of being illegally marked or mismarked.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #15: Supports

Proposed Resolution # 16
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Saginaw Field and Stream and Tom Heritier, MUCC Statewide Vice President
Passed: MUCC Region IV, February 21, 2016
Title: **RECOGNIZING DIVERSITY**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, The State of Michigan possesses a wide range of demographic, geographic, and
- 2 atmospheric diversity; and
- 3 **WHEREAS**, The Upper Peninsula of the State of Michigan is a prime example of this diversity; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, Hunting, fishing, trapping and other regulatory rules, regulations and considerations are
- 5 often formulated in a one size fits all type format; and
- 6 **WHEREAS**, The ice up, or freeze over average date is already in use by the Michigan Department
- 7 Natural Resources (MDNR) in determining waterfowl seasons. NOW,
- 8 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with and
- 9 urge the MDNR and other regulatory agencies to recognize this diversity and adapt their management
- 10 practices accordingly.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #16: The State of Michigan is indeed diverse and in some cases within our natural resources management, this geographic diversity is recognized and in some cases it

is not. We should balance the simplification of our hunting and fishing rules and regulations with recognizing the regional differences.

DNR RESPONSE #16: The Department is committed to managing for healthy and sustainable populations of wildlife and their habitats, as described in the Guiding Principles and Strategies (GPS): Wildlife Division Strategic Plan 2016-2020. This includes improving coordination in the planning process by better linking statewide and regional priorities. Wildlife population and habitat management occurs on all land ownerships at ecologically appropriate scales according to statewide priorities. In addition, many game species are regulated through management units, where the specific area's habitat, harvest data, and population assessment factors are considered prior to the Department developing management recommendations. The Department administers at the regional level to focus management on regional issues. Decisions are supported by scientific facts and principles, and reflect the needs of species, desires of partners, concerns of stakeholders, and changing conditions and information. The Department is also committed to continually evaluating our work to ensure effective stewardship of Michigan's natural resources.

Fisheries Division works to protect, rehabilitate and enhance the state's fish populations, which provide the best overall freshwater fishing opportunities in the world. The division's efforts are carefully planned utilizing a litany of information from years of assessment, research and experience combined with valued input from a broad range of stakeholders, as described in the Fisheries strategic plan; Charting the Course: Fisheries Division's Framework for Managing Aquatic Resources – produced to guide the division's actions through 2017. Michigan's rich aquatic diversity is second to none with more than 11,000 lakes, 36,000 miles of rivers and streams and 43 percent of the Great Lakes waters. The

Department is responsible for managing more fresh water than any other state, and these waters contain a wide variety of aquatic life, including 154 different species of fish. Michigan's anglers can boast of a wide variety of noteworthy fishing opportunities unmatched in any other state and the Department tries to find balance between utilizing statewide (one size fits all) regulations to manage the resource versus incorporating special regulations in specific waters with unique populations. Regulation proposals are prepared based upon the best scientific data available and the Department works with partners and stakeholders in order to determine the most appropriate level of regulatory complexity that

Michigan's anglers will support to manage the state's natural resources, now and into the future.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #16: Wildlife Committee neither supports nor opposes this resolution because we feel this diversity is already considered by the DNR.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #16: Supports

Proposed Resolution #17
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Tomahawk Archers, 2085 W. Erie Road, Temperance, MI 48182

Passed: MUCC Region IV, February 21, 2016

Title: **DESIGNATE THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY AS STATE INSECT OF MICHIGAN**

1 **WHEREAS**, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) mission is “Uniting citizens to conserve,
2 protect, and enhance Michigan's natural resources and outdoor heritage.”
3 **WHEREAS**, MUCC supports non-game species that are critical to healthy ecosystems
4 **WHEREAS**, the loss of any species weakens the ecosystem that all species rely on for survival,
5 including humans. (National Wildlife Federation)
6 **WHEREAS**, Michigan is one of three states that does not have an official state insect;
7 **WHEREAS**, The Monarch Butterfly, a native of Michigan, has declined by more than 90% in the last
8 20 years due to loss of overwintering habitat and 1/3 loss of breeding habitat (Including here in
9 Michigan.)
10 **WHEREAS**, Pollinators, including the Monarch Butterfly, account for 1/3 of our food supply, which
11 generates \$20 billion in annual U.S. agricultural production and \$217 billion worldwide
12 **WHEREAS**, the United States Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Program supports
13 the CP42 *Pollinator Habitat Initiative*. Pheasants Forever, a partner of Monarch Joint Venture and
14 MUCC, utilizes this program for upland game cover as well.
15 **WHEREAS** selecting the Monarch Butterfly as Michigan’s State Insect will increase awareness for
16 the need to grow more additional pollinator habitat, which will also benefit Michigan’s rich small
17 game and upland hunting heritage by providing improved habitat for all species.
18 **WHEREAS** the Monarch's migration attracts numerous tourists annually to the shores of the Great
19 Lakes to witness one of the world’s great migrations as the Monarchs begin their 3000 mile journey
20 to their wintering grounds in Mexico increases public awareness, participation and enjoyment of
21 Michigan’s natural resources and provides a higher quality of life with economic benefits through
22 ecotourism. NOW,
23 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Michigan United Conservations Clubs (MUCC) use the
24 strength of its 40,000 plus hunters, anglers, trappers and conservationists and over 200 affiliated local
25 clubs around the state to support proposed bill and have the membership contact their state

26 representatives and senators in support of making the Monarch Butterfly the official state insect of
27 Michigan; and
28 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that by supporting this resolution, MUCC will help build
29 relationships with numerous diverse conservation groups, hunters and non-hunters alike, by coming
30 together to support vital Monarch Butterfly conservation and its state designation as Michigan’s state
31 insect
32 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Michigan United Conservation Clubs support Senator Jim
33 Marleau future bill to make the Monarch Butterfly, a native to Michigan, the state insect of Michigan.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #17: Concurrent legislation was introduced in the Senate (SB 812 by Sen. Jim Marleau (R-Lake Orion)) and in the House (HB 5560 by Rep. Aric Nesbit (R-Lawton)) to designate monarch butterflies as the official state insect in February. From a conservation perspective, monarchs are a native species that are declining due to loss of milkweed habitat, and additional awareness of the issue through designation could encourage more people to plant milkweed for them. From a public relations perspective, it will demonstrate our commitment to conservation of nongame species, as well as game species in Michigan.

DNR RESPONSE #17: The Department supports the conservation of non-game species that are critical to healthy ecosystems. Monarch education and outreach programs and habitat management are important mechanisms to help conserve this unique butterfly. The Department, in cooperation with federal agencies, universities and non-profit organizations, will be conducting a Monarch butterfly symposium in late 2016 or early 2017 to gather conservation partners from across the state to learn more about on-going efforts and to identify key strategies needed to improve the conservation of Monarchs in Michigan. However, the Department believes that the general public should choose the official state insect of Michigan.

MUCC HUNTER SAFETY COMMITTEE COMMENTS #17: Supports

Proposed Resolution # 18
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Michigan Bow Hunters Association
Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016
Title: **DEFINING “PNEUMATIC GUNS THAT LAUNCH ARROWS”**

1 **WHEREAS**, since Michigan’s first separate bow hunting season in 1937 technology experimentation
2 has enabled the ability to make more reliable bow hunting equipment and efficient crossbows to date;
3 and

4 **WHEREAS**, legal archery season hunting equipment in our state to hunt big game with are
5 longbows, recurves, compound bows and crossbows, including modified bows by permit; and
6 **WHEREAS**, a bow is defined in part as a device that launches an arrow quarrel or bolt via string
7 contact with projectile; and
8 **WHEREAS**, the heritage and history of Michigan’s archery season are more than just additional days
9 afield to hunt big game with archery equipment, it is a lifestyle and passion to many sportsmen,
10 sportswomen and their families; and
11 **WHEREAS**, there are products on the market which fire an arrow utilizing air pressure, OR
12 an arrow launching rifle utilizing the pressure of blank ammunition as means of propulsion; and
13 **WHEREAS**, in Michigan law, "Pneumatic gun" means any implement, designed as a gun, that will
14 expel a BB or pellet by spring, gas, or air. Pneumatic gun includes a paintball gun that expels by
15 pneumatic pressure plastic balls filled with paint for the purpose of marking the point of impact; and
16 **WHEREAS**, there is rising controversy towards increased technology and its use in hunting and
17 during Michigan’s archery deer season which could limit recreation time or harvest for archery
18 hunters; NOW
19 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Michigan United Conservation Clubs support legislation to
20 add to the definition of pneumatic gun, pneumatic guns that launch arrows; and
21 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that MUCC work with the Michigan Department of Natural
22 Resources and Natural Resources Commission in the regulation of pneumatic guns.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #18: The Benjamin Pioneer “Airbow” was introduced in the past year, and has received significant attention due to its endorsement by outdoor personality Jim Shockey. Video demonstrations have shown successful take of deer in Alabama, where it is allowed during the firearm and airgun season but not in their archery season. Specially-made arrows are fitted over a long air tube in the barrel of the airgun, which delivers compressed air to the head of the arrow to drive it forward. MUCC has received a few inquiries about legalizing it for hunting in Michigan through our Michigan Out-of-Doors Facebook Page.

However, in no way is the “Airbow” an archery device. The power used to propel the arrow is pressurized air. This resolution would not by itself indicate support for the use of “Airbows” for

hunting, but the exploration of the merits of it, and the unequivocal understanding that, should “Airbows” ever be allowed for hunting in Michigan, they would be allowed only as a pneumatic gun and **NOT** as archery equipment.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #18: Wildlife Committee supports the resolution, unanimously.

DNR RESPONSE #18: The Department opposes this resolution at this time. These “airbows” are new technology and the Department has not had a chance to properly evaluate them. Research is needed to determine their effectiveness, capability, and safety. For example, with no state standards on minimum and maximum specifications, manufacturers may make a unit which cannot effectively take certain species humanely.

Proposed Resolution #19
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: MUCC Wildlife Committee and District 20
Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016
Title: **FEDERAL FISH AND WILDLIFE DISEASE TRUST FUND**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, fish and wildlife diseases presents a serious risk to Michigan’s native and naturalized
2 wildlife populations; and
3 **WHEREAS**, responses to outbreaks of fish and wildlife diseases require the mobilization of people,
4 resources, and communications assets by the state and its partners; and
5 **WHEREAS**, the funding for fish and wildlife disease response is primarily borne by hunters, anglers,
6 and trappers through their license dollars; and
7 **WHEREAS**, no funds have been set aside to provide for fish and wildlife disease response; and
8 **WHEREAS**, fish and wildlife disease outbreaks are becoming regional and at times national events.
9 NOW,
10 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
11 National Wildlife Federation, other non-governmental organization partners and our congressional
12 delegation to establish a federal fish and wildlife disease trust fund and;
13 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the federal fish and wildlife disease trust fund be available for
14 state agency response to fish and wildlife disease outbreaks and;

15 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the fish and wildlife disease trust fund be established outside
16 of the discretionary spending framework established by Congress so that the funds are not subject to
17 appropriation by Congress.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #19: Fish and wildlife disease issues rarely arise neatly within an appropriations cycle and rapid access to resources can mean the difference between eradication and containment/management of a disease incident. As fish and wildlife disease concerns command greater management attention and present challenging regional/transboundary problems, we must look for ways to ensure that state fish and wildlife agencies have access to resources to enable swift action.

DNR RESPONSE #19: Establishment of federal fund for disease outbreaks would enable the Department to respond in a more expedient manner without realignment of the Department's fiscal year budget. The definition of disease could be broadened to extend beyond fish and wildlife. The funds would have to be available for disbursement in a timely manner with minimal bureaucracy. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies may be a candidate to lead this effort.

In general, having such a response fund would be beneficial to the Department and to our public trust resources. Current funding for fish and wildlife disease responses varies depending on how close the interaction is between the wild organisms and humans or commerce. In most cases, it is true that the licensed angling and hunting community is bearing the costs, but there is investment of state general and federal funds that have been spent to deal with Bovine TB, CWD, BKD (1980s to 2000), and VHSV. There is also a limited amount of federal funds that are currently used for wildlife (USDA and USGS) and fisheries (USFWS and NOAA-NMFS) disease surveillance and diagnosis.

The call for a federal fish and wildlife trust fund for fish and wildlife disease response has merit and having its own authorization and appropriation is the best way to insure federal funding. The Department would be concerned with where such funds would come from (i.e., would the funds come from existing federal fish and wildlife funding streams that could hurt natural resource agencies in other ways or be a zero sum game or is it truly new funds); which federal agency would administer the funds and how the funds would be distributed and the likely required state match amount.

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #19: Wildlife Committee supports unanimously.

Proposed Resolution # 20
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: MUCC Wildlife Committee and District 20
Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016
Title: **NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE**

1 **WHEREAS**, the Natural Resources Commission’s authority and duties are provided for in the
2 Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994; and
3 **WHEREAS**, state law specifies that “The commission shall meet at least once each month” (MCL
4 324.501); and
5 **WHEREAS**, in 2013, the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) adopted multi-year regulation
6 cycles for various game species in an effort to simplify and stabilize the ever changing hunting and
7 trapping regulations and fisheries orders have been updated on a multi-year cycle for years; and
8 **WHEREAS**, Moving away from the annual regulations process to multi-year regulations can not
9 only provide some assurances for the hunter, trapper, and angler on what the rules are, but also give
10 biologists more of a chance to collect scientific data to see the impact of the regulations and the
11 relative trend of wildlife and fish populations before proposing changes; and
12 **WHEREAS**, due to this change, the monthly workload of the NRC has decreased and monthly
13 meetings may not always be required to act on regulation changes; and
14 **WHEREAS**, NRC meetings present a significant time commitment to the Department of Natural
15 Resources staff due to the requirement for staff from all divisions to prepare, attend, give
16 presentations, and be available for questions. NOW,
17 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Michigan United Conservation Clubs support legislation to
18 allow the NRC to meet as often as necessary to accomplish their duties, which may be less frequently
19 than monthly, but no less than 8 times per year.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #20: This resolution provides greater flexibility to the Natural Resources Commission to execute their duties in the most efficient manner possible. The statutory requirement that the NRC meeting at least monthly may have been appropriate when considering the broad range of duties and issues the NRC was responsible for. Historically, the NRC would make decisions on matters of fish and game, method and manner of take, solid waste, landfills, wetlands, air permits, and a host of other subjects. Today, with the scope of the NRC’s authority focused to promulgating science based regulations and establishing the legal methods and manner of taking fish and game, the need to meet twelve months out of the year may no longer be present. This change will enable the NRC to tailor its meeting schedule to align more closely with its migration toward multi-year regulations cycles and its more limited scope of responsibilities.

DNR RESPONSE #20: Will be available on MUCC's website by approximately May 6, 2016 and in hard copy at Convention: http://www.mucc.org/mucc_annual_convention

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #20: Wildlife Committee supports unanimously.

Proposed Resolution # 21
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Michigan Hunting Dog Federation
Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016
Title: **BEAR BAITING DURING DOG TRAINING SEASON**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, baiting bears is not allowed until August in Michigan; and
2 **WHEREAS**, dog training starts July 8th; and
3 **WHEREAS**, baiting is an important aid in dog training; and
4 **WHEREAS**, it is difficult to find tracks in the woods or on gravel roads; and
5 **WHEREAS**, early baiting would have no impact on the number of bears killed in season; and
6 **WHEREAS**, baiting in the woods would help to keep bears from scavenging near homes and
7 becoming a problem. NOW,
8 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
9 Department of Natural Resources and Natural Resources Commission to allow baiting for bears to
10 begin July 8th.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #21: While MUCC remains opposed to harvesting deer over bait due to concerns with disease, we support the practice of bear baiting generally. It is our understanding that, unlike with deer, there are no current diseases in the bear population where baiting may enhance transmission. There are reasonable restrictions over the types of bait in certain locations, timing, and number of bait stations allowed and it is assumed that these would also be supported by MUCC in the proposed expanded baiting season. Bear baits using grains, fruits, vegetables, salt and minerals should be restricted in this early baiting season and continue to not be allowed in counties closed to deer and elk feeding and deer baiting.

DNR RESPONSE #21: Will be available on MUCC's website by approximately May 6, 2016 and in hard copy at Convention: http://www.mucc.org/mucc_annual_convention

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #21: Wildlife Committee supports with the following amendment:

Strike lines 5 -7 in their entirety, we do not see any proof to these statements and believe them to be suggestive only.

Proposed Resolution # 22
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Michigan Hunting Dog Federation
Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016
Title: **BAITING WITH BARRELS**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, many states and Canada use barrels for baiting bears; and
- 2 **WHEREAS**, barrels can help for comparison in judging the size of a bear; and
- 3 **WHEREAS**, there is a problem with wolves in the Upper Peninsula; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, wolves would not be as likely to be attracted to grain in a barrel with a few small holes
- 5 to let the grain out as well as other types of baiting; and
- 6 **WHEREAS**, barrels would be limited to no more than three 3/4” holes to allow bait to pass through;
- 7 and
- 8 **WHEREAS**, barrels would be required to be anchored to a tree and have the owners name and
- 9 address attached; and
- 10 **WHEREAS**, this would help bait sites from becoming littered and the barrels would have to be
- 11 removed at the end of the season. NOW,
- 12 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, That Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
- 13 Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resource Commission to allow the use of barrels
- 14 for baiting bears.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS: #22: While MUCC remains opposed to harvesting deer over bait due to concerns with disease, we generally support the practice of bear baiting. In 2012, MUCC approved a resolution requesting that MUCC actively oppose any Legislation or Commission Order that would legalize the use of tethered, large volume, bait containers on public land. This proposed resolution would reverse this policy and allow MUCC to support the use of barrel baiting for bears on public lands.

Most recently in 2011-2012, the DNR Wildlife Division (WLD) reviewed requests to allow the use of barrels in bear baiting on public lands. The following is a published response:

“All Divisions within the DNR with experience in the use of barrels on public lands opposed once again allowing this practice. Concerns raised included the tendency for litter to be left on public land, increases in hunter conflicts over baiting locations, damage to trees, etc.” (from March 12, 2012 DNR Memorandum to the Natural Resources Commission regarding Bear Regulations and Quotas)

However, some hunters believe barrels could be helpful in determining whether a bear is a cub based on its relative size to the barrel. This is also a tool that might be used by hunters that live outside of the area they hunt, to allow them to keep a bait site active through the slow release container a barrel would provide.

DNR RESPONSE #22: Will be available on MUCC’s website by approximately May 6, 2016 and in hard copy at Convention: http://www.mucc.org/mucc_annual_convention

MUCC WILDLIFE COMMITTEE COMMENTS #22: Wildlife Committee supports with the following amendments:

- Amend Line 5 to stop the point after the word “out” and strike out the words “~~as well as other types of baiting.~~”
- Amend Line 6-7 to add after word through “**WITHOUT MECHANICAL AID.**”
- Amend Line 9 to add these words after the word attached “**IN A PERMANENT MANNER.**”

Proposed Resolution # 23
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Rob Miller, Bowfishing Association of Michigan (BAM)

Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016

Title: **WISE UTILIZATION OF ALL OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, Bowfishing can and often is used as a method to rid our waters of unwanted, destructive
- 2 nonnative species; and
- 3 **WHEREAS**, More often than not the harvested species are of little to no value as table fare; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, Many bowfishing events and tournaments result in hundreds to thousands of these
- 5 rough fish being harvested; and
- 6 **WHEREAS**, the best use of this resource has been donating these to a rendering company to either
- 7 be made into fertilizer or animal feed; and

8 **WHEREAS**, starting last year, the Bowfishing Association of Michigan (BAM) has been told that
9 they can no longer donate these fish to a rendering company because that company *may* be making a
10 profit from this donation and it is illegal to use fish harvested from a sports fishing license for profit.
11 **WHEREAS**, this only leaves the option of paying a waste hauling company to bring this resource to
12 a landfill and completely waste it; and
13 **WHEREAS**, this action goes against the very fundamentals of wildlife management; and
14 **WHEREAS**, this action goes directly against the Michigan United Conservation Club (MUCC)
15 pledge which reads in part “defend from waste the natural resources of my country.” NOW,
16 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, MUCC works with the Department of Natural Resources
17 (DNR), Natural Resource Committee (NRC) and any other necessary entities to make a clear
18 statement allowing harvested rough fish to be donated to a rendering or similar facility allowing them
19 to be put to good use without any stipulations related to profits to the company that may or may not
20 come from this donation; and
21 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, This issue is to be made a priority issue as the bowfishing season
22 will be in full swing at the time of convention with the current interpretation of our laws resulting in
23 the intentional waste of one of our natural resources.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #23: This raises an important consideration about the conservation of game fish compared to other non-game fish not highly valued. Carp, gar, dogfish, sheepshead and any number of rough fish are not on the list of game fish in law, however all fish are property of the citizens held in public trust by the state. This may take an act of Michigan Legislation to clarify.

Asian carp collected in the Chicago Area Waterways System are commonly sent to restaurants, food banks, and fertilizer production facilities, but they are collected, not caught on a sport fishing license. Selling furs has been considered a legitimate use of the trapper’s harvest for decades, but commercial fishing has all but been eliminated in Michigan except for the remaining tribal fishermen.

In state law, it states “A person shall not purchase, buy, or sell, attempt to purchase, buy, or sell, transport to any point outside of this state at any time, or possess during the periods in which the taking or catching of the fish is prohibited, any species of fish taken on a sport fishing license or any species of fish taken without a commercial fishing license.” But state law also provides for the DNR to “issue permits for the removal of dogfish, carp, garfish, sheepshead, and other noxious fish from all the waters over which this state has jurisdiction....However, the department shall be present at the

time and place of the taking and removal of the fish and a representative of the department shall personally superintend the taking and removal.”

It may be necessary to amend the law and regulations for permits to remove “noxious fish” to allow bowfishing tournaments (without the burden of DNR providing staff to every tournament) to then donate the fish to a company.

DNR RESPONSE #23: Will be available on MUCC’s website by approximately May 6, 2016 and in hard copy at Convention: http://www.mucc.org/mucc_annual_convention

Proposed Resolution # 24

Submitted by: Michigan B.A.S.S. Nation
Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016
Title: **BASS TOURNAMENTS ARE LEGITIMATE, LEGAL FISHING
STYLE**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, fishing tournaments are legal in Michigan and not regulated differently than any other
2 fishing during the harvest season for that species; and
3 **WHEREAS**, the main difference between most anglers and bass tournament anglers is that bass
4 tournament anglers tend to fish in groups during a set time at a set place; and
5 **WHEREAS**, there are no studies or evidence that bass tournaments harm bass populations, but they
6 are a significant source of economic benefit to Michigan’s natural resource economy with a single
7 state level event creating more than \$100,000 in economic impact and a national event as much as \$3
8 million or more; and
9 **WHEREAS** additional recreational enjoyment and economic benefit could be had in Michigan with
10 more bass tournaments more often; and
11 **WHEREAS**, Michigan has over 1,000 bass tournaments per year already, but we have the resources
12 and public access sites available to handle many more bass tournaments similar to other states that
13 have several thousand bass tournaments per year and consistently attract national and televised
14 events; and

15 **WHEREAS**, bass fishing is the 2nd most popular type of fishing in Michigan and Michigan’s bass
16 fishing is rated as good to excellent in part because of the high voluntary catch-and-release ethic that
17 bass tournament anglers have made popular since the early 1970s; and
18 **WHEREAS**, public access sites are first-come, first-serve to all boaters and anglers all the time; and
19 **WHEREAS** bass tournaments have been unfairly limited access to boat ramps by time, place and
20 number of events regardless of actual supply and demand of parking spots and public access sites.
21 NOW,
22 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs supports bass
23 tournament fishing as a legal, legitimate form of fishing that is good for Michigan; and
24 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs support the equal
25 opportunity and right for bass tournaments and bass tournament anglers to have access to boater
26 access sites on a pure, first-come, first-serve basis unless science shows some reason solely related to
27 bass tournaments that it is necessary to regulate bass tournaments differently than other fishing
28 tournaments for the protection of Michigan bass populations; and
29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with bass
30 tournament groups and anglers to investigate and promote more bass tournament opportunity in
31 Michigan as long as there is a sustainable and resilient bass population available.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #24: Michigan is blessed with abundant and diverse fisheries resources. There are tournaments for every type of fishing—pike, walleye, salmon, bass and even rough fish for bowfishing. As long as tournaments are bound by the regulations of the fishing opportunities open at the time, they are a legal opportunity to enjoy the resource. There is also some who suggest that the competition aspect may interest and keep youth engaged in improving their fishing techniques longer than just recreational fishing.

While there is a need to manage boat ramp access to prevent multiple events from occurring on the same day, the DNR has already developed a system to do so. In October 2015, the NRC approved an order that those planning or organizing a bass fishing tournament in 2016 must be registered with the DNR. This requirement is for bass tournaments only and covers those that occur at both DNR and non-DNR-owned boat launches. In addition to registration, the Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System also offers a public search component to identify when and where tournaments are occurring throughout Michigan.

DNR RESPONSE #24: Will be available on MUCC’s website by approximately May 6, 2016 and in hard copy at Convention: http://www.mucc.org/mucc_annual_convention

Proposed Resolution # 25
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Michigan B.A.S.S. Nation
Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016
Title: **BASS FISHING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT 2016**

1 **WHEREAS**, bass fishing is the 2nd most popular type of fishing in Michigan; and
2 **WHEREAS**, Michigan’s bass fishing is rated as good to excellent in part because of the high
3 voluntary catch-and-release ethic that bass tournament anglers have made popular since the early
4 1970s; and
5 **WHEREAS**, bass fishing has been liberalized 3 times in Michigan with zero new opportunity given
6 to catch and delayed release or catch and keep bass fishing despite any definitive studies showing
7 these limits to only certain types of fishing are necessary; and
8 **WHEREAS**, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources has suggested that Michigan bass
9 populations are different from other states and provinces so that not all or any studies done elsewhere
10 might apply; and
11 **WHEREAS**, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources says Michigan-specific studies to look
12 at the impact of certain bass fishing opportunities would be prohibitively costly and time-consuming
13 and they do not have the resources, or have not prioritized the effort using the revenue from the
14 increased fishing license fees; and
15 **WHEREAS** In Michigan, we already have an abundance of resources and public access sites
16 available to handle many more bass tournaments similar to other states that have several thousand
17 bass tournaments per year and consistently attract national and televised events; and

18 **WHEREAS**, an accepted management technique – Adaptive Management – has been successfully
19 used to save money and time in other major, complex resource management practices such as the
20 Florida 10-year bass management plan and the national wildfowl management program; and
21 **WHEREAS**, adaptive management is experimental manipulation of a system under management, to
22 learn something new and useful about its behavior, such that it can possibly be managed in the future
23 to provide greater benefit than possible without that information on its behavior; NOW,
24 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs supports urging
25 the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Division and the Natural Resources
26 Commission to use Adaptive Management to learn by doing as the Wildlife Division has done; and
27 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs support Adaptive
28 Management as an acceptable alternative to conducting Michigan-specific research studies on bass
29 populations and instead of not collecting any data on what an expansion of bass fishing opportunity
30 may do to the population.
31 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs promote Adaptive
32 Management as an acceptable solution to providing more bass fishing opportunity to anglers who are
33 asking for that additional opportunity – to learn how much more bass fishing opportunity our
34 resources can handle by liberalizing bass fishing fairly for other bass anglers besides only catch-and-
35 immediate-release anglers.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #25: Adaptive management is the method by which we manage most species in Michigan, particularly those in high abundance and relatively resilient. Where there is not perfect knowledge of the consequences of management, we use the best available information to determine a course of action according to our goals for the fisheries or wildlife population (setting season lengths, bag limits etc) and then monitor this over the course of years and adjust accordingly.

For example, deer are not hunted to achieve a specific numerical goal, but the issuance of antlerless licenses (a driver of deer population) is adjusted by identifying key impacts on the ground (browsing, car deer accidents) and collecting data on numerous factors that might influence the population (weather severity, habitat quality, predation). The recent move to multi-year regulation cycles then allows biologists to aggregate the data over time and make course corrections through changing regulations based on the trends that develop.

The bass proposal that was before the NRC in October 2015 was to test an assumption (based on evidence from southern states) that early catch and delayed release (via tournaments) would not have any significant impact on bass populations and would add additional recreational opportunity. It was limited to 12 inland lakes in a variety of locations. MUCC supported this because we felt it was reasonably limited, an opportunity to gather data, and the lakes chosen were not fragile ecosystems but generally high quality fisheries that would be resilient in order to conduct this adaptive management approach in the absence of Michigan specific research data (though results from many other states were available) to guide us. Ultimately, the NRC choose to be conservative in the face of uncertainty and not adopt this component of the regulation change. MUCC has continued to call on the DNR to conduct more bass studies to address the uncertainties.

DNR RESPONSE #25: Will be available on MUCC’s website by approximately May 6, 2016 and in hard copy at Convention: http://www.mucc.org/mucc_annual_convention

Proposed Resolution # 26
Requires 2/3 Majority

Submitted by: Michigan B.A.S.S. Nation
Passed: MUCC District 20, April 6, 2016
Title: **LIMITING KILLING AND REMOVAL OF AQUATIC PLANT HABITAT**

- 1 **WHEREAS**, aquatic plants are important habitat in most Michigan waters for fish and wildlife; and
- 2 **WHEREAS**, a balance of healthy aquatic plants can improve fishing productivity in most Michigan
- 3 waters; and
- 4 **WHEREAS**, even some exotic invasive aquatic plants have been in Michigan for decades allowing
- 5 Michigan fish to adapt to using them as productive habitat; and
- 6 **WHEREAS**, many lake chemical treatments and mechanical harvest actions fail to have any follow-
- 7 up work that assists native aquatic plants in recovering or mitigates the loss of habitat; and
- 8 **WHEREAS** the public waters of Michigan support a recreational fishing economy that annually
- 9 generates \$4.2 billion in economic effect, \$1.4 billion in salary and wages, 38,000 jobs, \$287 million
- 10 in state and local tax revenue, is ranked #3 in angler expenditures among states nationally, and #2
- 11 nationally in number of non-resident visiting anglers (only behind Florida); and

12 **WHEREAS**, killing all or most of the aquatic plants in a body of water can cause harm to the fishery
13 in affecting fish health, removing critical habitat for young and adult fish, even artificially increasing
14 the harvest of fish due to loss of cover; and

15 **WHEREAS** aquatic plants provide an important chemical service to the water and the organisms in
16 them in the form of removal of carbons and addition of oxygen; NOW,

17 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
18 necessary partners in the permitting and regulatory process such as the Michigan Department of
19 Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality and others as necessary to bring
20 about wiser and more restricted use of chemical, biological and mechanical aquatic plant treatments
21 to allow a more balanced approach for healthy lakes and rivers; and

22 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the treatment of native aquatic plants be much more limited
23 than it is now; and

24 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs work with the
25 appropriate parties to work towards requiring proper recovery plans for native aquatic plants, and
26 other remediation or mitigation when large treatments of invasive aquatic plants occur; and

27 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Michigan United Conservation Clubs officially supports
28 the importance of Michigan’s aquatic plant habitat to providing a health fishery on many Michigan
29 lakes and rivers.

MUCC STAFF COMMENTS #26: While MUCC has been aggressive in calling for more funding and action to address invasive species prevention, control and eradication, we value our fisheries resource and support maintaining necessary aquatic habitats. Lakes and rivers should not be considered “swimming pools,” eradicating all plant growth will eventually impact the fisheries, will increase algae growth, and ultimately will make the lakes less desirable for recreation.

It will be necessary to educate local units of governments, lake associations, and other riparian landowners to achieve the understanding and culture change about embracing healthy aquatic plant systems and recovery. There are no “one size fits all” approaches and the permitting system is an appropriate place to have that discussion of balanced approaches for that particular body of water. This does not preclude still doing the necessary education to, over time, reduce the applications for permits to control weed growth.

DNR RESPONSE #26: Will be available on MUCC's website by approximately May 6, 2016 and in hard copy at Convention: [http://www.mucc.org/mucc annual convention](http://www.mucc.org/mucc_annual_convention)