

**MI State Chapter Board of Directors
National Wild Turkey Federation
July 18, 2015**

Tony Snyder, President, called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM.
Tony led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

Roll Call and Introductions

Absent Region 1: Ken Buchholtz
Present Region 2: Pete Demos
Absent Region 2: Jim Szilagyi
Present Region 3: Tony Snyder, Art Pelon, Gary Salmon, Jan Kuhtic, Phil Kuhtic, Ron Hopkins, Hugh Marx, Frank Brazynetz, Jon Gray
Absent Region 3: Dave Godley, Bert VanderWeele, Garry Biniecki
Guests: Al Bobrofsky, Former NWTF National Board, Bob Garner
Present NWTF Staff: Steve Sharp, Senior Regional Director, Tom Karsten, Regional Director, Ryan Boyer, Regional Biologist

Correspondence, Agenda, and Minutes

MI FFA gave a letter of thanks for our support of their program, and thanks from Jamie Hatfield, an FFA student.
Russ Mason thanks us for supporting the GEMS program.
The MI Everton thanks us for sponsoring a dinner for state competition. Student teams from North America held a competition of science projects at Ft. Custer.
The Pure Michigan participants thank us for our contributions to their experiences.
Jason Allen thanks us for the Legislative turkey hunt.
We saw an article and picture of the NWTF convention award given to Turkeyville Toms for their Wheelin' Sportsmen hunt for disabled veterans.
Drew Youngdyke wrote a press release on the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, which passed in MI with our support. A judge upheld this act this week.

We have had no contact with last year's scholarship winner.

The minutes of the January 17, 2015 board meeting were approved with no changes (Pete, Jon, carried).

We added FFA to the agenda under New Business. The agenda is approved.

Treasurer's Report (Gary)

The Habitat Enhancement account balance on January 15 was \$1,612.44. One check was written for \$290, and the balance on July 18 is \$1,322.44.
The General Fund had a balance of \$19,591.91 on January 15. Deposits since then were \$44,031.36 and checks were \$54,057.90 for a current balance of \$9,565.37. The details of the checks are listed. The Treasurer's report is approved (Pete, Jan, carried).

NWTF Staff Reports

Steve reports that NWTF did not have a summer meeting. Regional meetings are coming up. There are changes to the budget process for chapters, which should be known by September.

The second JAKES Take Aim unit is in use now. It is the shooting booth only, and fits in the back of a pick up truck. There will be a new online recording process ready soon which includes all of outreach.

We need to revisit all banquet spending. We must stick to our mission and be good stewards of our funds.

Ryan reviewed the many acres conserved in 2015 so far, including grass seed drilling of 140 acres, Conservation Seed on 3,555 acres, 200 acres in the Allegan State Game Area, and 173 acres on the Gregory State Game Area. Total acres conserved so far 4,325. The money match has been 8:1.

Ryan supports the proposal to expand the Hunter Access Program (HAP). He will meet with M. Parker to discuss partnership and needs. The Hayes Road acquisition is still being reviewed by USFWS. They met and spoke with DU, and hopefully will get funded and transferred to USFS. Funds are needed to assist with HAP and land access acquisition with the DNR and other partners. Financial incentives of \$12-\$25 per acre are given, depending the acreage, habitat, and what game is allowed. We could potentially offer dollars for spring turkey hunting access. In the future, private landowner guides will center on wild turkey hunting access.

It costs \$250 per acre to restore and conserve, so to conserve 52,730 acres (our goal) it would cost \$13,182,500. The national average is a 6:1 match, so the cost divided by 6 is \$2,197,083 of NWTF dollars or 1,700 acres at \$250 per acre. We need \$70,833 more of NWTF dollars to reach our 1-year goal for STH2, and \$708,333 to reach our 10-year goal.

Ryan reports that the Allegan State Game Area project should be done in August, the Gregory State Game Area should be done in September. The Manistee National Forest savanna project is extended. The Midwest Monarch Conservation Enhancement is completed. Work on the Ottawa is completed.

There are many partners, and many volunteer opportunities. We hope for a grant approval in October for mast plantings, winter cover, and trails in northern MI

District Workshops Update

2 District workshops have been completed, but we need at least 2-3 more in the state, and we need more participation. We may consider a webinar option.

The MI GEMS project is working for turkeys. Ideally, we should have this in each focal landscape. This would enhance community and local business support. We will get a kiosk showing our current projects, and get DNR approval. It will show NWTF, Ruffed Grouse, and DU partnerships. Barry State Game Area could be shown first with past and present successes.

Bob Garner has a grass drill, and is willing to help plant grass plots.

Project signs 2 X 3 feet size could be used to post an explanation for each larger project. Smaller signs could be available to members whenever work is completed on a smaller project. These could be sold at banquets, and include dates, chapter names, etc. At a cost

of \$7.70 each (if 100 ordered), including the sign, graphics, shipping, etc. selling 31 at \$25 could pay for the entire lot.

NWTF license plates are not looking successful in MI. 20,000 would have to be ordered in the first year. We could raise as much as \$53,000 if it could be accomplished.

NWTF Director of Development Chris Eder is working with large donors and large gifts to NWTF and expanding finance models.

NWTF would like a contract written for the Regional Biologist position. Each state board and the RB should sign. The terms are 2-3 years; either party can end the contract. The level of commitment and term, the pay per year needs to be written. This will help to account for the dollars spent. Tony and Ryan will work out the details and seek board approval. (See more under new Business)

The DNR is working a State Wildlife Action Plan, probably done by September.

The 3-year turkey hunting regulation/management cycle is ending in 2016. A turkey stakeholder meeting will be held later this summer.

Steve is working with Ryan on how to include chapter support and volunteer work. We need to communicate with our membership what we are doing with the money. Maybe use a placemat at our banquets, or make and distribute a video?

Tom reports that 3 of his chapters are greatly improved, and 3 of the 23 “lost” chapters are back. We need help with names in the Gaylord area for a chapter.

Several events are coming up, including a gun bash and banquets. Thornapple WITO in September, also at Turkeyville Toms and Branch County.

The JTA trailer is at Steve’s now, but we have no one to manage it right now.

The State Convention is being planned. We need all chapters to participate and underwrite the Core Package for this state-wide event.

Super Fund requests can be done at any time, but are due by December 1.

Tom needs a projector (new for \$600) for use at banquets.

DNR Report (Steve)

2016 is when we make changes for future turkey regulations. A handout is given to help us consider our options. Our goal is to create the most hunter access while maintaining a quality hunt.

Avian influenza not expected to impact wild turkeys.

The only explanation given for not moving birds north this year is caution due to “bird flu”. The only problem in northern lower MI is few turkeys, and this can be remedied.

State Board Vacancies (Tony)

We have 2 vacancies in Region 2 and one vacancy in Region 1. We have interest in Region 2, so papers will be completed and action taken in September.

Any interest in Region 1 or Region 2, please tell Tony.

Conservation Seed (Gary)

Ryan has been compensated for his work. Five chapters still owe money for seed, so \$6,500 is still due.

IN will talk to M. Kennedy and R. Longenback about our success, and they hope to emulate our Conservation Seed program.

We may expect a new list with prices in September.

Our goal is to increase Conservation Seed by 10% a year.

PR & Media (Jon)

NWTF has made drastic changes in the web sites with a different server. Each state has options of site management for a charge (\$400) or the NWTF will host it. We will continue to manage the MI web site. We cannot get to the web site now. Jon will load the data when it goes live.

Save the Hunt (Jon)

We can enter our events online and report hunting statistics. Chapters need this information, and we need information from our chapters in order to get credit/counts. Steve enters numbers for JAKES events. When an event is registered, the Regional Director needs a report at event closure.

Hunter Education instructors need to be NWTF members so their students can be counted. Hunter Ed is now in the Law Enforcement Division. We need to find out membership status while respecting their privacy. If any of us are involved in Hunter Safety classes, please talk with Steve.

We need a mentor coordinator. We need funding, possibly from a grant. The Glasson Foundation, DNR, and maybe other NGOs will share this position. Pheasants Forever is a probable partner. This position would include the JTA trailer use at state parks.

Habitat Enhancement (Pete)

White oaks are planted that avoid the oak wilt disease. Butternut bushes, high bush cranberries, and the different species of crab apple are doing well. The Round-Up ready soybeans are 3 foot tall, and the sunflowers are good.

Rose Lake and the Pelon home have about 900 trees for planting.

State Convention (Jan)

The MI State Chapter convention will be January 15 and 16, 2016 at the Holiday Inn, Big Rapids. We have tentative plans for Tom Stuckey for our guest speaker. We hope for greater participation by this board and all chapters. We will consider a "robo call" to give information in addition to the mailing to the chapter presidents.

We discussed whether the auction package should be used, how we could offer incentives for chapter participation, and a euchre tournament on Friday.

Super Fund (Tony)

Most of our events are using funds from the Outreach Fund.

Apply for Super Fund any time now, and before December 1.

Patch Program (Ron)

Expenses are \$10,587.89 for 8,000 patches, postage and supplies. Revenue is \$21,959.19 for 4,391 patches sold. Total profit is \$11,371.30.

We still have a full set for state convention. We have a full set at NWTF which we need to keep up to date.

Rules & Regulations (Hugh)

We are in the middle of the 3-year cycle. Talk with your DNR regional biologist about your own area. We are watching the numbers from the spring and fall turkey hunts.

Awards (Tony)

Nominations are due December 1 for state awards, and sooner is better.

Fundraising (Ron)

No activity to report.

Budget (Gary)

Tony will research old minutes to clarify the approval of lodging cost for UP board members for the state convention.

Some lines are added on the budget based on this year's expenses.

The current budget with actual expenses year to date (YTD) is reviewed:

Executive Board \$2,750, YTD \$1,760; Conservation Seed \$25, YTD \$0;
PR/Media \$2,174, YTD \$1,928; Outreach Programs \$3,950, YTD \$3,250;
Habitat Enhancement \$3,593, YTD \$3,268; State Convention \$5,000, YTD \$1,440;
State Calling Contest \$1,500, YTD \$1,522; Super Fund Committee \$25, YTD \$0;
Rules & Regulations \$25, YTD \$0; Awards & Scholarships \$4,775, YTD \$1,080;
Fund Raising \$25, YTD \$0; RD \$7,300, YTD \$1,590.

Total budget 2015 – 2016 \$29,643, YTD \$15,838. Total budget 2014 – 2015 \$22,490, actual \$13,386.

Comment - under Outreach the Michigan Outdoor News ad was a one-time expense and the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation will come from Habitat Enhancement.

Old Business

The state calling contest was well done. A few changes will be made. The state pays for only the state calling contest.

The Outdoor News \$2,500 investment was a one-time expense, with 4 issues released at banquet and show season. Maybe we could pay less for a smaller ad next time.

Rod & Rifle Bourbon status is unknown, since the owner passed and at this time the company is no longer operating.

New Business

How does our support of FFA align with our mission? Are these students becoming NWTF members? We will cut the amount we donate to \$500 and use the \$1000 for a second state scholarship (Phil, Art, carried). This second place scholarship will be awarded at the state convention, but not with free meals. The Awards Committee will work out the details.

The JTA trailer needs equipment and supplies. For the second unit, we need cases, arrows and bolts. We need arrows for the Genesis bows. The longbows have racks. The BB guns need cases. The annual budget for this will be \$300 (Jon, Art, carried).

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the state chapter and NWTF will provide annual monetary support for the Regional Biologist and his work on America's Crossroads focal landscapes, the time line for habitat improvement, and an annual review of plans and accomplishments. NWTF provides administration, benefits, supervision, evaluations, etc. The state board shares project proposal ideas and assists in carrying out the work. This MOU is reviewed annually. We know that this position is critical to our mission. We will provide \$10,000 in 2016, 2017, and 2018, then establish a 2-year term (Hugh, Art, carried).

The Sportsman's Caucus Advisory Council recently received the 501c4 status. The NWTF will have to provide funding in the future for involvement.

A turkey management workshop will be held in Lansing on August 10 to discuss wild turkey management and regulations in MI.

The next state board meeting is September 19 at the MSU Demmer Center. Please give agenda items to Tony.

Submitted by Jan Kuhtic

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