

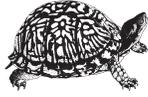


Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

Monthly Report

www.mefishwildlife.com

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November, 2014

WILDLIFE DIVISION

Improvement to Lt. Gordon Manuel WMA - *Written by Amanda DeMusz*



Lt Gordon Manuel wildlife management area (WMA) is one of the larger management areas in northern Maine, with over 6,000 acres of land. It provides many hunting, fishing, and recreational opportunities for the public. As part of its ongoing management, we have completed several projects this summer to improve habitat and manage water levels.

The first projects tackled were to address issues surrounding culverts in the western section of the management area. A combination of old failing culverts and busy beavers left several roads and surrounding uplands inundated with excess water. In cooperation with APHIS Wildlife Services and private contractors we were able to place structures called "beaver deceivers" at the entrance to several culverts. These mitigation structures consist of metal cage style fencing

combined with PVC piping, which allow water to flow through at several angles and prevent beavers from plugging culverts with dirt and debris. The next project farther down the road was a bit more involved. In this location a small dike maintains wetland habitat for wading birds and waterfowl. However failing culverts and beaver activity were causing it to flood and threatened to wash out the entire dike. We replaced the culverts with new, longer culverts with special holes cut in the bottom to allow for water flow. Cages were placed on the ends to prevent beaver from filling the culvert entrances with dirt and debris. Both projects were successful in returning water levels to desired levels and maintaining ideal wetland habitat.



The second major project was to reclaim field habitats that had become overgrown with young spruce and fir trees. For species such as woodcock, fields adjacent to more upland forests provides essential habitat for activities such as breeding and nesting. In cooperation with the Fish and Wildlife Service, we were able to clear many of these fields using an impressive machine called a hydro-axe and return them to a more beneficial resource for many species that utilize early successional habitat. Additionally, the clearing of the fields opened up the area around several apple trees which will enhance the trees ability to grow and produce valuable food for wildlife including white-tailed deer.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

In October, the Commissioner attended meetings and events:

- Bucks Mills Rod & Gun Club forum
- Baxter Park Authority meeting
- Both the Commissioner and Deputy attended the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) conference in Bar Harbor
- York County Associated Sportsmans Clubs forum in Kittery
- Landowner and Landuser annual awards banquet
- Fallen officers tribute run and memorial

INFORMATION CENTER

In October the front office of the Dept. received and replied to (approx):

- 5,006 Phone calls
- 2,835 Emails
- 353 Walk-ins



Missed an issue?

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Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

Swan Island

Maine Wildlife Park

MAINE WARDEN SERVICE



Maine Warden Service: This week, nearly 30 runners took part in the 7th annual Fallen Warden Tribute Run. One mile is run for each of Maine's 15 Game Wardens who have died in the line of duty since the Service began back in 1880. Game wardens, Maine State Troopers, Marine Patrol Officers, US Fish & Wildlife Agents, as well as other friends and family joined in this year's memorial run.

Colonel Joel Wilkinson of the Maine Warden Service stated "no matter the circumstances surrounding our daily lives, we will pause every October and remember both the sacrifice each warden gave and the families of these great men." At the completion of each mile runners pause and recognize a warden who died in the line of duty. The run begins at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy in Vassalboro and ends at the Maine Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Augusta near the front of the State Capitol.

Warden Pelkey was busy this past moose hunting week. He addressed an incident where both a cow and bull were killed on a bull tag and another where the moose was killed in the wrong zone. He and K-9 Badger also assisted Warden Smart with a cow moose that was shot and left.



Warden Kemp teamed up with Warden Dauphinee Saturday. The two conducted a 4 hour ATV detail in the section. They issued 4 summonses and some warnings for ATV violations, loaded firearms, and marijuana possession.



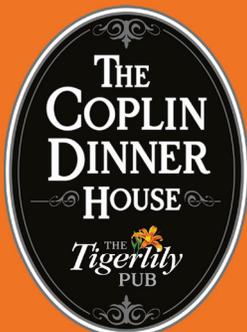
Warden Richardson and Sergeant Spahr responded to a complaint of a subject hunting geese on Sunday. When arriving, Warden Richardson interviewed the subject who admitted to shooting a Canada goose. Sergeant Spahr located the dead bird in a nearby pond. The subject was charged with Hunting on Sunday and was warned for a number of migratory bird violations.



Warden Cross has been taking the opportunity during the mid-weeks to put some foot miles on in search of baited stands and other areas to focus on this fall. He located two new baited tree stands in Thorndike. Warden Cross attended several speaking engagements during this period including hunter safety courses and the Maine Sportsman's Night event at Mount View High School.



Recently the Department participated in the 7th Annual Harvest on the Harbor event in Portland. We partnered with Tony Rossi, owner of The Coplin Dinner House in Stratton, to create and serve delicious samples made from moose, deer, and bear meat. This event sold out, and our booth seemed to be the most popular, with Toni running out of food before the event was even over. The event was a huge success and we have heard it was their "Best One Yet"!




HARVEST
on the
HARBOR
Food. Wine. Maine.

FISHERIES & HATCHERIES DIVISION

Fish Passage on the Kennebec River - *Written by Jason Seiders, Regional Fisheries Biologist, Belgrade Lakes Region*

Fisheries staff from the Sidney Regional Headquarters have been actively involved in numerous fish passage projects in the Kennebec River watershed. One of these projects involves designing fish passage facilities at two hydroelectric projects on the lower reaches of the river. Both projects involve large-scale passage facilities for alewife, blueback herring, American shad, and Atlantic salmon. These species are all native to Maine waters; spending their adult lives at sea and returning to the Kennebec River watershed to spawn. Given the precarious status of Atlantic salmon, these facilities are important to any recovery process. The alewife and shad are important because their juveniles serve as forage for not only our inland sportfish (bass and trout species), but they also form a valuable part of the food web for marine species such as cod.



Restoring fish passage for these species is important, but it must be done carefully in order to prevent the spread of unwanted exotic fish species that now inhabit the lower Kennebec River. Common carp are present from Merrymeeting Bay all the way north to Waterville, and they are certainly a species that can wreak havoc on our lakes and ponds. Carp feed by sifting through bottom substrates in search of food. This massive disturbance can cause negative impacts to water quality by increasing the amount of silt in the water. In some cases, siltation of the water can cause a lack of light in the water column, impacting the growth of native vegetation.

Another, perhaps less familiar invader is white catfish. White catfish were introduced into the lower Kennebec River decades ago, and can now be found from Merrymeeting Bay all the way to Waterville. We receive angler reports of white catfish reaching 8 pounds - certainly a large predator by Maine standards. Region B fisheries staff recently captured a white catfish in the Kennebec River in Sidney and examined it to determine its food habits. This 16-inch catfish had consumed a 12 inch American eel! This certainly puts white catfish at the top of the list of fish that we don't want to see in our lakes and ponds. They could quickly become a top predator that not only compete for food with our sportfish, but they would likely consume trout, bass, and other fishes as well.



We've been working closely with other natural resource agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the Maine Department of Marine Resources, as well as the dam owners themselves, to design fish passage facilities that will aid in restoring anadromous fish while excluding these unwanted invaders. We are confident that this cooperative effort will allow us to achieve the goal of restoring these important native species, while protecting our valuable inland fisheries resources from additional exotic fish.



IFW's fisheries dive team is a valuable asset to the department. Several of our fisheries biologists are certified divers, and they conduct fishery habitat surveys, spawning surveys, invasive species confirmation, as well as maintenance and repairs for our fish hatchery intakes. In these photos, one of our divers visits a river spawning area for native brook trout, and captures some fantastic underwater photos of brook trout.



SWAN ISLAND



Swan Island had a great 2014 season, and the Island is now closed up for the winter! We had a very good year with day use and camping up from the last couple years. There was a significant increase in our revenue for the season, probably due to 3 improvements: we relocated/improved the self access/self pay iron rangers for increased compliance; two fantastic seasonal staff we were able to better service visitors, increasing donations; we sold firewood and IFW merchandise, and we offered a variety of weekend and special events.

In addition, 497 children and teachers attended I/E programs in May, June, Sept. and Oct., 400 of which attending for free thanks to a grant Lisa secured from the Merrymeeting Bay Trust.

A big thank you goes to Conservation Aides Dennis and Heather Anne for their enthusiasm and hard work this season...without it we wouldn't have accomplished half of our projects.

