



# RD CHATTER

**February 2009**

*Inside this Issue:*

**1**

RUFF Capital Campaign Update  
*Tailfeathers* Membership Drive

**2**

Minnesota Court Favors  
Conservationists

**3**

Alaskan Conservation Plan Omits  
Hunting as Priority

**Regional News & Updates**

## *National News*

### **RUFF Capital Campaign Nears Halfway Mark**

RUFF, or Restoring Upland Forests' Future, is a capital campaign aiming to raise \$5 million dollars in the next two years. The money will be used to fully endow our team of biologists and to reduce overhead by purchasing a building for headquarters.

To date a total of \$2.1 million dollars has been raised – placing us just shy of the halfway mark.

Make a donation today by calling 1-888-564-6747, or on our website [www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org).

### **Tail Feathers Membership Drive**

*Will you be our 2009 Super Recruiter?*

A new membership recruitment program will allow members, and their chapters, to compete for the title of Super Recruiter 2009.

When you introduce a new member to the Ruffed Grouse Society, let us know and we will track your credits. Top recruiters will be posted, along with a running tally of credits, on our website. We'll also keep you posted of your standing during the course of the year.

Rules:

Each member will receive one individual credit, and one credit for their chapter every time they sign up a new member through the end of 2009. In January, 2010 a tally will be taken to determine the top individual recruiter and the top chapter recruiter.

The individual will receive a special edition Tail Feather Super Recruiter Grouse Display from headquarters, as well as recognition on the website, magazine and at their banquet.

The chapter with the most credits will get their

chapter name engraved on a plaque to be displayed at headquarters and presented by their Regional Director at the 2010 chapter banquet.

**To receive credit for the contest you must do one of the following:**

1. Fill out a recruitment form, (which is posted on the website) and send the completed form to: Membership Department, 451 McCormick Road, Coraopolis, PA 15108,
2. Send an email with your new member information to: [membership@ruffedgrousesociety.org](mailto:membership@ruffedgrousesociety.org), or
3. Write your name on the back of the banquet stub, and specify that you are a super recruiter.

*Note: If you have already signed up new members this year, let us know and you will receive credit accordingly.*

A new member is anyone brand new to the organization, or someone who has not renewed their membership in the past 365 days. Any level of new membership/sponsorship counts for one credit toward the program.

**Contact the Membership Department with questions: 1-888-564-6747.**

### **Minnesota Court Sides with Conservationists in Superior National Forest Lawsuit**

#### *US Forest Service to Proceed with Habitat Management Projects*

An important legal victory was won recently in a case regarding the Superior National Forest (SNF) in northern Minnesota. The Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) joined with others - including Minnesota Forest Industries, Inc., Minnesota Timber Producers Association, All Terrain Vehicle Association of Minnesota, Blue Ribbon Coalition, Lake County and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources - to defend important habitat management projects being proposed by the US Forest Service in the area. These projects were part of the recently revised Forest Plan.

In 2008 the Sierra Club and other preservationists had filed suit to halt the implementation of the Forest Plan, on the grounds that the Plan allowed habitat management projects adjacent to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW). They argued that these projects would affect the wilderness character of the BWCAW itself, and should be prohibited.

Last November the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota granted RGS its request to appear as amicus curiae in support of the US Forest Service (USFS) and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) in their defense against the litigation.

Preservationists argued that aspen clear-cutting and other logging – despite the fact that it will benefit ruffed grouse, American woodcock and other species of wildlife in the SNF - will negatively impact not only the forest itself, but the adjacent BWCAW as well.

Speaking on behalf of RGS, attorney Ryan Woody of Hartford, Wisconsin, provided arguments to the contrary of the preservationists' claims. In late January of this year the court ruled in favor of the defense on all counts.

“The win on the SNF case is important because it involved the newly revised Forest Plan, which governs all future management and projects on the SNF for at least the next 15 years. In addition, I think the court’s decision is important for future projects, because the court showed its respect for the Forest Service’s expertise and reviewed the Plan under a very deferential approach ... As far as RGS is concerned the newly affirmed plan should provide for important opportunities to actively manage forest conditions to improve early successional habitat for ruffed grouse and other species,” Woody said.

RGS Senior Regional Wildlife Biologist Gary Zimmer agreed with Woody’s assessment, adding that “The Court decision supports the many years of planning conducted by the Forest Service when it revised the Superior National Forest Plan. After years of delays, it is now time to implement that revised Plan in this area.”

## Conservation Plan of Alaskan Wildlife Refuge Omits Hunting as Priority Objective

### *RGS Disappointed at Absence*

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Draft Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge does not list enhancing game wildlife habitat and populations or hunting opportunities in the listed goals of the Plan to enhance wildlife-oriented recreation.

At nearly two million acres in size, the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge - located about two and a half hours from Anchorage in south-central Alaska - is characterized by its diverse habitats and wildlife. Created in 1941 to protect the Kenai moose, 65 percent of refuge lands are designated wilderness.

In a letter to US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) Planning Team Leader Rob Campellone, Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) Director of Conservation, Dan Dessecker wrote: "This is especially disconcerting given that public comments provided during the development of the Draft demonstrate that hunting is tied with hiking as the second most popular form of public recreation on the refuge. In addition, this conspicuous absence of hunting from the list of priority objectives for the refuge runs counter to clear direction provided by President George W. Bush in his Executive Order 13443, the stated purpose of which is to facilitate the expansion of hunting opportunities and the management of game species and their habitats." Dessecker added that if implemented, the current Draft will lead to reductions in habitats essential for game wildlife and, therefore, hunting opportunities.

RGS respectfully urges the US Fish & Wildlife Service to modify and select an alternative for implementation that will aid in meeting public expectations for recreation on the refuge and help to secure the future of our hunting heritage.

## REGIONAL NEWS

Your regional NEWS updates. *Please Forward* this on to your friends.

If you have someone that wishes to receive this, have them e-mail me their address.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to post information that fits with this newsletter.

There are many events around the state to take part in. Again it is difficult for RGS to mail a flyer out to everyone in the state, please check the website for events:

[www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org)

### *Help Support Your Local Chapter*

If you have an interest in being part of a great organization & would like to be involved or just want to sit in on a chapter meeting. Please contact me at this e-mail address: [rgsdrd@centurytel.net](mailto:rgsdrd@centurytel.net) and I'll put you in contact with your local chapter representative.

*There is no better way of supporting your passion and the RGS mission than to join your local chapter's committee.*

## New Chapters

Please welcome new chapters to our region, if you would like more information regarding these chapters please contact me.

- Thunder Bay Chapter, Alpena, MI – Banquet scheduled for Saturday March 21, 2009
- Copper Country Chapter, Houghton, MI – Banquet scheduled for Thursday June 11, 2009

## Youth Shooting Program

One of the big topics at this year annual chapter workshop was youth retention into the shooting sports, chapters discussed on how recruit youth into the shooting sports and hunting. Discussions on several types of events were put to the floor for discussion. What came out of the discussion was a new program, youth shot gun competition event amongst chapters, with the top four placements from each chapter to go on to a state wide competition. Please watch your flyers in the next few months as chapters will be announcing their local program. **If you** have an interest in being involved with this program please contact your local chapter.

## Spring Events

For complete details on these events please visit the RGS website: [www.ruffedgrousesocietyv.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesocietyv.org)

### BANQUETS

- Al Litzenburger Chapter, Petoskey, MI – Sunday August 2, 2009
- Andy Ammann Chapter, Lansing, MI – Friday, April 17, 2009
- Eastern U.P. Chapter, St. Ignace, MI - Friday, May 8, 2009
- Jim Foote Chapter, Gaylord, MI – Friday, June 19, 2009
- Grand Rapids Chapter, Grand Rapids, MI – Wednesday, August 26, 2009
- Copper Country Chapter, Houghton, MI – Thursday June 11, 2009
- Keith Davis Chapter, Flint, MI – Friday, March 13, 2009
- LeGrand Traverse Chapter, Traverse City, MI – Saturday Sept. 12, 2009
- Mid U.P. Chapter, Marquette, MI – Thursday, Sept. 24, 2009
- North Woods Chapter, Crystal Falls, MI – Thursday, October 1, 2009
- Robert J. Lytle Chapter, Imlay City, MI – Friday March 28, 2009
- Saginaw Valley Chapter, Saginaw, MI – Friday, March 6, 2009
- Southeast Michigan Chapter, Detroit, MI – Tuesday Sept. 15, 2009
- Southwestern Michigan Chapter – Kalamazoo, MI – Friday, April 4, 2009
- Thunder Bay Chapter, Alpena, MI – Saturday March 21, 2009 (NEW)
- Tri-County Chapter, Ann Arbor, MI – Saturday May 2, 2009
- West Michigan Lakeshore Chapter, Muskegon, MI – Friday, May 15, 2009

## SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Sportsmen's Expo Birch Run – Jan. 30 – Feb. 1**
- **Out-Door-Rama Expo – Novi Feb. 26 – March 1**
- **U.P. Chapter Workshop – Saturday Feb. 28**
- **Grand Rapids Expo – March 19 – 22**
- **Traverse City Hunt & Fishing Expo - March 20 – 22**
- **Tri-County Chapter Fun Trial – Saturday, March 21**
- **Robert J. Lytle Chapter Fun Trial – Saturday, April 18**
- **Purina Gun Dog Training – Saturday, May 2**  
**(Tri-Chapter Event-Gaylord, Petoskey & Traverse City)**
- **Purina Gun Dog Training – Saturday, May 3**  
**(Southwestern Michigan Chapter)**
- **Jim Foote Chapter Fun Trial – Saturday, May 16**
- **West Michigan Lake Shore Chapter Fun Trial – Saturday June 6**



**“Little Trees Need Hugs Too!!!”**

## **HABITAT PROJECTS – Chapter Days**

**!!Get Involved & Help Make A Difference!!**

### **Andy Ammann Chapter**

#### **Habitat Project-Winter 2009: Popple Regeneration Site at DNR-Rose Lake Station**

**Dates:** Saturday, January 31 and Saturday, February 28, 2009

**Location and Directions:** DNR-Rose Lake Wildlife Area: Bath Rd. between Woodbury Rd. & Peacock Rd. Take Old M-78 to the east and exit at Woodbury Rd. heading north. Turn left on Bath Rd.; just a short distance, turn in to a marked parking area on the south side. AA-RGS members will be on hand to assist in parking.

**Time: 9:00 am**--The project will involve removal only of shrubs and small trees to 3" diameter and stacking them. So, chain saws, pruning saws, loppers, and bow saws can all be used.

--The site to be cleared has been considerably expanded since last year by RL staff.

--Late arrivals follow the two-track through the open gate, past parked vehicles; on to where shuttle vehicles are parked.

**Lunch:** About 12:00-12:30 a warm meal, dessert and drinks will be provided

***Bring a friend or two--non-RGS members can participate too.***

### **Robert J. Lytle Chapter**

#### **Third annual Habitat Improvement Project**

**Location:** Lapeer State Game Area.

**Date:** April 11, 2009

**Time:** 9:00 AM to ?(2:00 PM)

**Details:** Meet at the Lapeer State Game Area in the parking lot at the north end of Long Lake Road north of Vernor Road.

- Bring chainsaws, pruning saws, loppers, bow saws and lots of ambition.
- Lunch will be provided.

**Please contact:** John Paige to sign up and so we can get a head count for lunch.

John Paige

Robert J. Lytle Chapter

Habitat Chairman

[jhpaige@chartermi.net](mailto:jhpaige@chartermi.net)

Cell: 810-938-0560

## **Ruffed Grouse Society 2008 Michigan Projects (In Progress)**

**Hiawatha National Forest Grouse Habitat Improvements**, Chippewa and Mackinac Counties, Michigan

An additional \$5,000 was provided for the ongoing Cost Share Partnership Program between the US Forest Service and the Ruffed Grouse Society. Funds contributed are being matched by the Forest Service, therefore doubling on the ground management activities. Funds in 2008 would continue the development of the Little Bear Ruffed Grouse and Woodcock Management Area on the St. Ignace Ranger District and begin habitat improvements on the Birch Farm Management Area near Rapid River.

**LeGrande Management Area Project**, Cheboygan County, Michigan

The project area is managed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and is located approximately six miles north of Afton, Michigan. Funds would be used to support ongoing ruffed grouse habitat work being conducted on the Pigeon River Wildlife Area. Work for 2008 includes the rehabilitation of approximately 12 acres of wildlife openings.

**Michigan Technological University Research Project**

RGS provided \$6,000 for a two year research project entitled; “*Optimizing Both Habitat Quality for Conservation-Concern Bird Species and Tree Productivity in Aspen Forests in the Great Lakes Region*”. With future prospects of using forest resources for cellulosic ethanol production, additional pressure most likely will fall on this regionally declining forest resource. This research is timely and will evaluate potential tradeoffs between biomass production and wildlife habitat management objectives in aspen stands and develop recommendations for managing aspen forests to meet quality-oriented standards.

**Huron/Manistee National Forest Non-Commercial Aspen Regeneration**, Cadillac Ranger District, Lake and Wexford Counties, Michigan

This project is a continuation of work that was initiated in 2007. Funds are being used to regenerate non-commercial aspen habitat on sites inaccessible for commercial harvests. This important habitat management activity would not occur without outside funding support. The cost to conduct the work is estimated to be \$300/acre.

**Pending Project –**

**Ottawa National Forest Grouse Habitat Improvements**, Gogebic and Ontonagon Counties, Michigan

An additional \$5,000 is targeted for the ongoing Cost Share Partnership Program between the US Forest Service and the Ruffed Grouse Society on the Ottawa National Forest. Any funds contributed would be matched by the Forest Service, therefore doubling the amount of management activities. These funds would support non-commercial alder and aspen regeneration harvests as well as improvements to Hunter Walking Trail Systems including the long established Harris Creek Disabled Hunting Trail System.

**\*\*Planting Time is Right Around the Corner\*\***  
**\*\*Order Your Habitat Seed Mix Today\*\***  
 (available in bulk quantities)



## **RGS GROUSE TRAIL MIX**

- **Starfire Red Clover**
- **Hunt Club™ Brand White Clover**
- **Plot Enhancer™ Brand Chicory**
- **Alsike Clover**
- **Birdsfoot Trefoil**
- **Crimson Clover**

**RGS Grouse Trail Mix** is a combination of both perennial legumes and chicory formulated to produce high protein content all season long. **RGS Grouse Trail Mix** is formulated to tolerate poorer soils. Plot Enhancer™ Brand Chicory will provide continuous feed in the summer when the legumes are either producing seed heads and are less palatable or during the droughtier times due to its tap root system.

**RGS Grouse Trail Mix** can be seeded in the Spring or Fall, or Frost Seeded. For optimum growth, persistence, and maturity soils should have a pH of 5.8 or higher and nutrient levels should be adjusted to soil tests results.

Sow **RGS Grouse Trail Mix** at 12 pound per acre.

***Attract the Wild!***



## 2008 Sponsor Winners !!!!

The seven National Raffle Winners are as follows:

1. Bruce Visniski, Muskegon, MI – Guerini Forum Grade O/U 28 Gauge, 28” Barrels (Muskegon, MI Chapter)
2. Paul Zelisko, Lake Forest, IL – Kimber Marias Grade II O/U 20 Gauge, 28” Barrels (Chicago, IL Chapter)
3. Shannon Staiger, Fairbanks, AK – Kimber Grade II Shotgun (Fairbanks, AK Chapter)
4. Dave Miles, Norton Shores, MI – Guerini Magnus O/U 28-Gauge, 28” Barrels (Muskegon, MI Chapter)
5. Terry Saylor, Canal Winchester, OH – Choice of any pair of Steiner Binoculars (MSRP of 1600 or less) (Lancaster, OH Chapter)
6. Damian Croyle, Hamilton, NY – Choice of any pair of Steiner Binoculars (MSRP of \$1600 or less) (Sherburne, NY Chapter)
7. John E. Charewicz, Plover, WI - \$1,000 Cabela’s Gift Certificate (Stevens Point, WI Chapter)

Sponsorship tickets for any of the RGS fundraiser dinners are available on line up until two weeks of the event. Just go to [www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org), click on Select State in the Migration Mapping & State Information box in the right panel of the home page. Choose a state; than under Upcoming State Events, click on the event of interest and you will be linked to a display of all important event details, including the ticket chairman’s contact information.

**!!!Two are from the West Michigan Lake Shore Chapter!!!**



*Pictured are Bruce Visniski & Mike Daly*

*To become eligible banquet attendees would have to purchase one of three sponsorship packages -- Banquet (\$275), Conservation (\$500) or Sustaining (\$1,000) -- each of which includes (along with various other incentives) 1, 2 and 4 tickets respectively.*

## 2009 Banquet Sponsor Rewards Program

The 2008 Banquet Sponsor Rewards Program was very popular this year. We will be selecting the 2008 Sponsor Rewards winners before the end of the year. The 2009 Sponsor Rewards Program Options is just as good if not better.

Option 1 – A sponsor may elect to receive an unframed print of the year, either the new one or one from prior years (while supplies last).

Option 2 – A sponsor may elect to participate in a national drawing at the end of the 2009 Fall Banquet Season. There will be seven tickets drawn. The first winner will win the first item in the list below and so on until all seven tickets are drawn. Sponsors who choose this option will be assigned a ticket number(s) for the drawing by RGS National.

### The Following Are The Seven Prizes Being Offered:

1. AYA #2 side-lock with detachable lock, 20 ga., 28” barrels, double trigger, side-by-side shotgun
2. Connecticut Shotgun’s RBL-28 round action, box-lock, 28 ga., 26” barrels, single trigger, side-by-side shotgun; 3X wood grade
3. Caesar Guerini Magnus over/under 20 ga. shotgun
4. Smith & Wesson Elite Gold side-by-side 20 ga. shotgun
5. SKB Limited Edition RGS #7 over/under shotgun in 20 or 28 ga., 26” or 28” barrels
6. Choice of any pair of Steiner Binoculars \$1,600 or less
7. \$1,000 Cabela’s gift certificate

## 2008/2009 RGS Upland Bird Dream Hunt Raffle

**First Place Prize - All Expense Paid Trip for Two to hunt from October 3-5, 2009 for sharptail grouse and Hungarian partridge at Bear paw Mountain Outfitters in Havre, Montana followed by participation in the National Grouse and Woodcock Hunt in grand Rapids, Minnesota from October 6-9. Both hunters also receive an SKB model 1785 o/u shotgun. Approximate value of package: \$18,000.**

**Second Place Prize - \$1,000 Cabela's Gift Certificate**

**Third Place Prize - Custom fitted Pair of upland hunting boots from Russell Moccasin Co. Approximate value of boots: \$400.**

Donation for Tickets are \$50 each, with winners drawn on June 30, 2009.

To Purchase Raffle Tickets Contact: Doug Doherty

at 231-549-5063 or rgsdrd@centurytel.net or mail the following to:

03695 Cobb Rd., Boyne Falls, MI 49713

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Tickets @ \$50.00 Each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed

CHECK (Payable to RGS) CASH CREDIT CARD

CC# \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



**Thank you for your continued support!!!**

**Douglas R. Doherty  
Regional Director  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
231-549-5063  
rgsdrd@centurytel.net**