

# SENTRY

**Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc**

2404 E. Broadway, Alton, IL 62002

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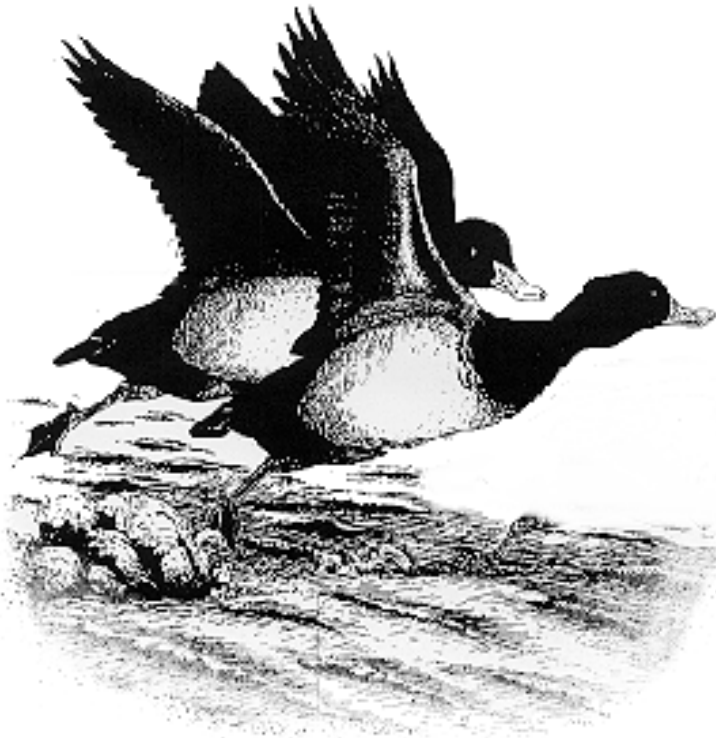
**VOLUME 37 ISSUE 1**

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**MWHI 7<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL**  
**WETLAND CONSERVATION BANQUET**

April 14, 2007

K.C. Banquet Hall, Godfrey, IL

For more information and reservations contact John Gineris at (618) 786-2596

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618-377-0397

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618-779-8313

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, February 5, 2007

**MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 p.m

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

**MWHI GENERAL MEETING**  
at the Alton-Wood River Sportsmen Club  
in Godfrey, IL at 7:00 p.m

Monday, March 5, 2007

**MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 p.m

Monday, March 5, 2007

**MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 p.m

Saturday, April 14, 2007

**MWHI 7<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL**  
**WETLAND CONSERVATION BANQUET**  
at K.C. Banquet Hall, Godfrey, IL  
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**Visit our website:**

**[www.mwhi.org](http://www.mwhi.org)**

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Statements and opinions expressed in the *Sentry* are those of the individual and do not necessarily represent the views of Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc. Officers, Directors, Advisors, Members or the Editor. The appearance of an ad in this newsletter does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of a product or service. We encourage our members to take note of those businesses advertising in our newsletter and shop with them when they are in the market for their product or services.

**2006 Duck Season**  
**The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly**  
**Duane Hahnenkamp**

**The Good**

Sounds like the duck hunting was pretty descent in most of our areas this season; at least until the ice storm and freeze-up jammed things up.

The first duck migration hit two weeks before season and it was a big one. I was in the Glades at daylight on October 12, the front was still hitting and the ducks were falling out of the sky everywhere. It reminded me of the big Veteran's Day flight day of the 1998 season. Most of these ducks stayed around until the freeze-up, which meant that they got tougher as the season went on.

I personally saw two more smaller migrations, the second one being on the day of the ice storm. I spent the next two days at home without power trying to thaw out my boat. By the time I got everything up and running, the lake froze solid. So I packed up and went to Southern Illinois to shoot ducks.

The hunting down south was excellent since they had open water and had picked up a lot of our ducks.

At the Glades, two weeks later when the lake thawed, the hunting was back to being spotty again, so I decided to pull my decoys and concentrate on duck hunting in Southern Illinois.

For many hunters in our areas, it was a banner season and the folks at the Rosedale IDNR office have the data to prove it. Just look at what Scott and the boys did in blind #236 at Stump Lake if you need any more proof.

**The Bad**

One thing I want to bring to your attention and possibly warn you about was something I experienced while hunting in North Dakota this year. North Dakota and a couple of other states chose to go with an alternative duck bag limit.

I don't know why the Feds offered this deal or what the benefits were supposed to be. All I know is that it lowered our daily bag limit from 6 to 5 ducks. They also cut out our daily bag option of 2 hen mallards, 1 pintail, and 1 canvasback down to 1 mallard hen or 1 pintail or 1 canvasback. This virtually cut the option of these 4 legal ducks down to only 1 of these in the bag. It was bad enough to loose a duck in our bag, but it was a nightmare trying to stay legal. A lot of the mallards did not have good colors, and if you shot a pintail first, there was no room for error.

We don't want this type of bag program, or anything like it, in Illinois. I can guarantee you that such a program would cause hunters to throw away ducks in the field to keep from getting a ticket. If you hear anyone from the IDNR talking about this option, please tell them you are not in favor of this at all.

**The Ugly**

The worst part of last season certainly wasn't the duck numbers, the weather, or the conditions. The thing that bothered me the most this season was the amount of high shooting I saw in my hunting area.

Now, I know that the Glades is known for high shooting, but guys, it was the worst I have ever seen in my 17 years of hunting at the Glades. Honest to God, it was an every day thing to watch blinds shoot at flocks of ducks when they still were between 50 and 70 yards away. These were not new hunters; these were guys who have duck hunted for 20 years or more. Then, these very same hunters had the nerve to complain about blinds around them for high shooting.

I am sorry, but when a blind full of hunters jump up, empty their guns and none or only one duck falls, it's pretty obvious that those ducks are to damn high. It all boils down to greedy hunters who don't care how they affect the other hunters on the lake. This is not factoring in the loss of crippled ducks by these guys or how the effects on the sport of duck hunting.

Despite the high shooting, the Glades supposedly had a record year. But I hate to think what next year will bring. I just read in December 2006 Wildfowler magazine that a company is testing a new waterfowl shot called SST, which is almost 100% tungsten. They are testing size #5 shoot SST and they claim it will kill a duck at 100 yards. Great, just what the Glades and the sport of duck hunting needed!

**Anti's Could Be Sent Up the River for Harassing Hunters on the River**  
**U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance 11/22/2006**

A pair of anti-hunters could do jail time after being charged with harassment of waterfowlers in Indiana.

Two animal activists from Osceola, Indiana face up to \$1,000 in fines and a year in jail if convicted of violating the state's hunter harassment law. The anti's allegedly disrupted sportsman Chris McDonald's waterfowl hunt on the St. Joseph River by blowing air horns, blaring music and boating into his decoys.

McDonald reported the incident to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. Officers stepped in and caught the perpetrators red-handed. They used a tape machine to record the anti's use of loud music and an air horn to disrupt legal hunting activities. A third

officer observed the situation through a spotting scope.

Both parties admitted to trying to keep the ducks away so they would not be hunted.

Hunter harassment laws have been enacted in all 50 states and upheld in several court rulings. The statutes are based on a model written by the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance. Several courts have ruled that hunter harassment laws do not infringe upon the right to free speech and assembly.

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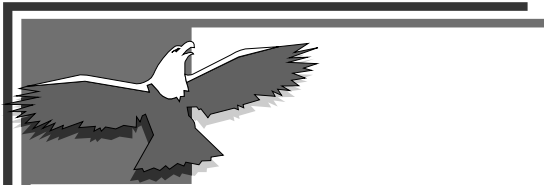
**Northeast Illinois December Canada Goose Ground Count Survey**  
**IDNR 12/29/06**

The Wildlife Division implemented two standardized ground count surveys in portions of northeastern Illinois in 1997 to gain a better understanding about the changing distribution of Canada geese. These surveys have provided valuable information on the status of wintering waterfowl in the state and we plan to continue the surveys this year.

The December goose survey route was completed the week of December 11-15 and the January waterfowl survey route will be done during the week of January 2-5.

During the same week that these ground counts were conducted we counted only 58,145 Canada geese via our usual aerial surveys in northeast IL (just south of the area covered by the ground surveys), west-central IL, central IL, southern IL, IL River and MS River. The 58,145 aerial count was 64% of the 5-year average. The 19,570 counted from the ground in the Chicago area was 36% of the 5-year average. When the aerial and ground surveys are combined the count was 53% of the 5-year average.

Hunting for Canada geese was very good in the north zone earlier but lately it has slowed down considerably. It is very slow in central and southern Illinois. It appears that most MVP geese are still in Wisconsin due the very mild weather and lack of snow.



## LEGISLATION UPDATE

**John Popov**

I hope all of you had a good duck season. I hope we have a good year protecting our Second Amendment rights as well.

You may not realize it, but this past election was a very good one for electing pro-gun legislators on the federal and state level.

The NRA says it was a record for pro-gun candidates. I sure hope we can keep all bad legislation from becoming law. We shall see.

A while back I wrote how the new anti-gun push was to have their candidates embrace the pro-gun line, and then after the election drop their bombs. We shall see.

In Illinois we may have a problem because the majority party in the House and Senate has a lot of anti-gun people. There is already a push for a 50 cal. and semi-automatic ban. Remember, both of these can affect shot guns. Stay awake!

On November 7, 2006, Michigan voters defeated a proposal to allow dove hunting, 68% to 32%. The Humane Society of the United States spent \$1.6 million out of \$2.3 million spent by the anti-hunters. The HSUS and Friends of the Animals have a \$100,000,000 anti-hunting slush fund, which could be spent to take away your right to hunt.

What I reported is now taking place. This is our war against hunter harassment or you can say a fight against anti-hunters who will stop at nothing. So be prepared for a long war. Prepare your children. This is for real.

If it is to be, it is up to you and me!

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

NRA Update on Gun Bills **1-800-392-8683**

Federal Senate Office **1-202-224-3121**

Federal House Offices **1-202-225-3121**

Illinois State Rifle Association **1-815-635-3198** [www.isra.org](http://www.isra.org)

Illinois Senate Information **1-217-782-4517**

Illinois House Information **1-217-782-8223**

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**Sen. Frank Watson** – 51<sup>st</sup> District

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**Sen. John O. Jones** – 54<sup>th</sup> District

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**Rep. Kurt Granberg** – 107<sup>th</sup> District

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**Rep. Wyvetter Younge** – 114<sup>th</sup> District

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**Rep. Mike Bost** – 115<sup>th</sup> District

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**Costello** - [jfc.il12@mail.house.gov](mailto:jfc.il12@mail.house.gov)

**Durbin** - [dick@durbin.senate.gov](mailto:dick@durbin.senate.gov)

**Barack Obama** – <http://obama.senate.gov>

**Shimkus** - <http://www.house.gov/shimkus>

# NRA-ILA Grassroots Alert

01/05/07

## **ILLINOIS**

The 95th Illinois General Assembly begins session next week, and we can expect another busy year of defending our Right to Keep and Bear Arms. While last November's elections were an overall success, anti-gun Governor Rod Blagojevich (D) was reelected, along with many legislators who have long anti-gun records, so we anticipate a renewed assault on the Second Amendment in Springfield.

On Wednesday, January 3, one of the most ardent supporters of the gun ban crusade in Illinois, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley (D), revealed his anti-gun fervor has not waned one iota in 17 years. Daley's proposals this week include a ban on countless semi-automatic handguns, rifles, and shotguns, as well as .50 caliber rifles. In addition, the mayor, along with anti-gun state Representative Edward Acevedo (D-2) and state Senator John Cullerton (D-6), proposed new restrictions on the private transfer of handguns between law-abiding citizens; expanding the current mandatory storage law, thus making it more difficult for law-abiding gun owners to use a firearm for personal protection in the home; creating a new state-based licensing bureaucracy for firearm dealers, in addition to the current federal system; and limiting the number of handguns a law-abiding citizen may purchase.

According to a recent Associated Press article, Sen. Cullerton claimed, "There's been a change in attitudes down in Springfield," apparently alluding to modest gains made by Democrats in the Illinois General Assembly in November. Cullerton seems to forget,

however, that numerous lawmakers, including many from his own party, do not share his opposition to the Second Amendment.

That said, the Illinois pro-Second Amendment community should be prepared for a more heated battle than we have seen in several years. With many new faces in the legislature, some of whom have been reluctant to elaborate on their views on firearms, it is critical that NRA members, gun owners, hunters, and sportsmen renew their efforts to contact their elected officials and urge them to oppose any attacks on our Right to Keep and Bear Arms.

Please take the time to contact your state senator and representative and urge him or her to stand up for your rights and protect the Second Amendment.

## **MISSOURI**

Representative Kenny Jones (R-117) has introduced House Bill 189, Missouri's "Castle Doctrine." This legislation will ensure that law-abiding Missourians will not have a duty to retreat from a violent attacker, and may stand their ground and meet force with force. As a former Sheriff, Representative Jones understands the critical importance of a citizen's right to self-defense, and HB189 will be a major step forward in protecting that right. Please contact your State Representative at (573) 751-0940 and urge him or her to protect your right to self-defense by supporting HB189, Missouri's "Castle Doctrine."

###

## **IDNR**

### **Waterfowl/Migratory Resident & Non-Resident Applications (includes Youth)**

- **2007 Dove** Hunting Application will be available **June, 2007**
- 
- **2007 Public Goose** Hunting Area Application will be available **August, 2007**
- 
- **2007 Public Duck** Hunting Area Application will be available **August, 2007**
- 
- **2007 Youth Waterfowl** Hunting Application will be available **September, 2007**

## *Brady Campaign “Giddy” About Election*

**Richard A. Pearson**  
**Executive Director, ISRA, 12/21/2006**

As I predicted, John Bolton, a fierce defender of the Second Amendment, was among the first casualties of the Democratic landslide victory in Congress. Bolton, who fought the United Nations’ (UN) anti-gun movement to a standstill, is gone. As a result, the international anti-gun movement is energized – and why shouldn’t they be? With the change in power in Congress, not only have votes of individual congressmen shifted to the left, but also so has the control of the all important Congressional Committees. Anti-gun legislators Charles Schumer, Dick Durbin, Edward Kennedy, Diane Feinstein, Hillary Clinton, and Barbara Boxer will soon be in leadership positions. That means every anti-gun bill ever conceived will have smooth sailing into the committee structure. We will see anti-gun proposals at the national, state, and local levels. Anti-gun force will probe for every weakness at every level.

The following are the Brady Campaign’s agenda for the 2007 – 2008 legislative session:

1. Re-enact assault weapons ban
2. Federalize private gunshow sales
3. Criminalize gunshot activity
4. \* Strengthen the Brady law
5. \* Curb illegal gun sales
6. \* Pass life saving gun laws
7. Repeal the Lawful Commerce in Firearms Act (the frivolous lawsuit ban)
8. Limit the number of firearms a person can buy

\* No definitions of what these goals mean.

They also plan to continue their successful operations that include:

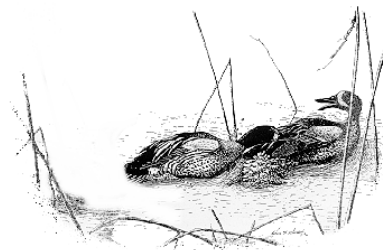
9. Block national concealed carry
10. Maintain the Washington D.C. gun ban
11. Continue gun-lock sales requirements
12. Fight anything the “sleezy” (their word) NRA proposes

13. Limit the available “military-style firearms”
14. Restrict “fast firing, bigger clips” guns

On November 14, 2006, a week after the election, the Cook County Board recalled a proposed “assault weapons ban” from the table and passed it. This ban, which was not on the agenda because it was a tabled motion, bans even pump and semi-automatic shotguns. It is easy to see where the anti-gunners are heading with this. In the past, some hunters have thought these proposed bans would never apply to them – well, here is your answer. Hunters are directly in the line of fire.

Can gun owners stop these attacks? Yes, but only if we get organized and stay organized. I urge all of you to join the Illinois State Rifle Association (ISRA) today! You can join by going to our Web site at [www.isra.org](http://www.isra.org) or by calling our office at 815/635-3198.

On March 14th, 2007 the ISRA will host a Gun Owner’s Lobby Day and Rally in Springfield. Lobby Day activities will begin at 12:30 pm in the Howlett Building Auditorium. At 1:00 pm there will be a legislative briefing and Lobby Day materials will be distributed. At approximately 2:00 pm we will begin lobbying legislators. The legislative reception and rally will take place between 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm. This is open to all gun owners. Please plan to attend.



## **Fox Sports Ends Anti-Trapping Spot**

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance 1/4/2007

(Columbus) - Fox Sports Net, which provides regional sports programming to 85 million households, will no longer run an anti-trapping advertisement produced by the nation's largest animal rights group, the Humane Society of the United States.

Thousands of angry sportsmen nationwide had sounded off to the network in December after the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance (USSA), the nation's leading sportsman advocacy organization, exposed the network's decision to air the political advertisement as a gratis public service announcement.

Fox Sports Net told USSA that the 15-second, anti-trapping commercial expired on Dec. 31 and will not run again. The advertisement featured Humane Society of the United States leader Wayne Pacelle and a second animal activist urging viewers to support trapping bans. To add to the sensationalism, the spot opened with a loud clank as a foot hold trap with teeth - a trap that has been banned throughout the country for decades - snapped shut.

"Sportsmen delivered a message to Fox Sports that they want the network to scrutinize the public service announcements it receives so that anti-trapping and anti-hunting political advertisements like this HSUS spot do not receive approval in the future," said Rick Story, USSA senior vice president. "Based on discussions USSA has had with the network, we anticipate that in the future it will pay much closer attention to ads that reflect such political viewpoints."

Trapping is recognized by every wildlife agency at the state and federal level as a viable and important conservation tool. It helps keep furbearer populations at healthy levels and is important in stemming the spread of wildlife diseases that threaten animals and humans.

The Humane Society of the United States opposes all animal use, including trapping, hunting and fishing. It has a multi-million dollar budget that it invests in legislative and ballot campaigns to ban trapping and hunting. It also has a legal arm to challenge sportsmen's rights in court.

Sportsmen can subscribe to the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance E-mail Network at [www.ussportsmen.org](http://www.ussportsmen.org) to stay informed about this and other issues that impact the future of America's outdoor heritage. ###

## **PETA Strikes Against Trapping**

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance 1/4/2007

One of the nation's most outspoken animal rights groups is pressuring local governments to eliminate beaver trapping programs.

The Chicago suburb of Orland Park has capitulated to demands by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and removed three conibear traps that had been set to control the beaver population. The animals have been building dams that are diverting water into local streets.

Village Manager R.J. Zeder admits that the beaver dams present hazards to motorists, but nonetheless caved to antis' demands and ordered the traps removed.

"For years, PETA has tried to chip at this nation's outdoor heritage by selling its half-truths and emotional propaganda to local governments," said U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance President Bud Pidgeon. "Sportsmen must educate local officials about the benefits of trapping as a wildlife management tool that helps protect public health and human safety."

Trapping is recognized by every wildlife agency at the state and federal level as a viable and important conservation tool. It helps keep furbearer populations at healthy levels and is important in stemming the spread of wildlife diseases that threaten animals and humans.

Sportsmen in and around Orland Park should ask Mr. Zeder to protect public safety and allow trapping to control the beaver population. Send comments to Mr. RJ Zeder, Village Manager, 14700 Ravinia Avenue, Orland Park, Illinois, 60462. You can also call (708) 403-6155.

## **Massachusetts Town Resists PETA Protests**

Town officials in West Boylston, Massachusetts are not caving to demands by PETA to stop trapping in an area where an unchecked beaver population has damaged property.

"We issued the (trapping) permit to protect the environment and to prevent flooding," said Robert Barrell, chairman of the Board of Health. The board approved the trapping license realizing that public safety and protection of the environment must come before animal rights.

Barbara Mard, secretary of the Board of Health, emphasized that the traps being used are designed for a humane kill. She contends that PETA's action alert to its members inaccurately describes the traps, which in fact kill the animals instantly.

###

## Sportsmen Join Lawsuit to Prevent Antis' Misuse of ESA to Ban Hunting

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance 1/4/2007

(Columbus) – The U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation has filed to represent sportsmen in a precedent-setting lawsuit brought by animal activists to derail hunting, fishing and trapping for abundant game wherever endangered or threatened species exist.

On Jan. 4, the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation (USSAF) asked U.S. District Judge John A. Woodcock Jr. for permission to join a federal lawsuit brought by the Animal Protection Institute against the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. In October 2006, the animal rights group sued to expand endangered and threatened species protections to healthy and abundant wildlife populations.

“Our goal is to prevent the animal rights movement from manipulating the Endangered Species Act to ban hunting, fishing and trapping,” said Rob Sexton, USSAF vice president for government affairs. “The case could set a precedent that affects the future of hunting, fishing and trapping and how they are used as wildlife management tools.”

At issue is the legal argument brought by anti-hunters that trapping of any species should be banned in order to prevent the possibility of inadvertently catching federally protected Canada lynx, bald eagles and gray wolves. There is no data proving this to be a problem.

“It is important for sportsmen to understand this lawsuit represents far more than a strike against a single sport,” said Sexton. “The trappers won't be the only ones impacted. If anti's can stop all trapping in a place where there is a *risk* of catching a Canada lynx, they can just as easily try to stop fishing in bodies of water where there is a *risk* of catching an endangered species of sturgeon.”

This lawsuit also treads on states' authority to manage wildlife. An unfavorable decision would

virtually require judges to close hunting, fishing and trapping.

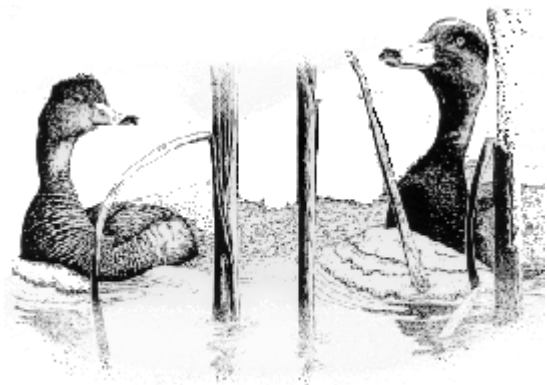
As the case develops, the USSAF continues to defend sportsmen's rights in two nearly identical lawsuits brought by anti's against the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. They also would set dangerous precedents that put hunting, fishing and trapping in jeopardy.

The USSAF has filed to join the case, along with the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, Maine Trappers Association, Fur Takers of America, and individual sportsmen Oscar Cronk, Donald Dudley and Alvin Theriault.

The U.S. Sportsmen's Legal Defense Fund is the nation's only litigation force that exclusively represents sportsmen's interests in the courts. It defends wildlife management and sportsmen's rights in local, state and federal courts. The U.S. SLDF represents the interests of sportsmen and assists government lawyers who have little or no background in wildlife law.

The U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation is a national association of sportsmen and sportsmen's organizations that protects and advances America's heritage of hunting, fishing and trapping.

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**The following editorial** appeared in the Saturday edition of *The Los Angeles Times* and **advocates the banning of lead hunting ammunition in California to protect the California condor.**

The California Fish & Game Commission announced that it agrees with the latest research that concluded that hunting ammunition is the main source of lead poisoning in California condors and is considering several options related to restrictions on lead ammunition for big game hunting beginning in 2007. In addition, a lawsuit was filed earlier this month by environmental groups, seeking to force a ban on lead hunting ammunition in areas where California condors feed on the carcasses of hunted animals.

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EDITORIAL

### Get the lead out of the condor

*Banning lead bullets could help keep the big bird in California skies.*

December 30, 2006

BACK IN THE good old Pleistocene Epoch, California condors sailed over the heads of sloths and saber-toothed cats, keeping an eye out for the tasty carcass of a mastodon. Eating the prehistoric version of fast food, they survived to the present day while those other species went extinct.

Now, however, they face extinction— there are only about 100 wild condors in California and Arizona (and that's up from 22 in 1987, when the last wild one was rounded up for a captive breeding program that has cost \$40 million so far). By banning some hunters from using lead ammunition, California can help the condor survive.

Despite their remarkably long-lived story, condors have problems surviving near humans. They fly into power lines, eat any small and shiny but possibly toxic object, drink antifreeze and like to hover around bustling activity. They don't produce enough eggs to overcome population losses, and they lack the ability to rid themselves of the toxic bits that get lodged in their gizzards.

That's why lead is one of the biggest threats to the condor. Lead pellets from ammunition, which the condors can ingest when they eat the remains of hunted animals, stay in their bodies while their acidic digestive system slowly dissolves the toxic metal. There are other sources of lead in the condor environment. But evidence is building that ammunition is a leading culprit, and environmentalists have sued the state to prohibit its use. Now the state Department of Fish and Game is planning to propose a ban on lead ammunition for big-game hunting— in condor territory if not statewide— to the state Fish and Game Commission.

Lead bullets already are banned in federal waterways. A private contractor is ridding Santa Cruz Island of its wild pigs using non-lead ammunition because federal officials want to avoid contaminating the island. The change would require some sacrifice from hunters. Copper or other non-lead bullets cost more than regular ammunition, but not much more: For the average hunter, it would cost an extra \$50 to \$70 a year.

Hearings on the proposal begin in February, and the commission should take action before the courts do. If, after several years, the change hasn't improved the condors' lot, hunters will have their own ammunition to argue for an end to the ban— and wildlife experts will be left to find other ways to save the largest bird in North America.

###

# **Service Releases Draft Environmental Assessment for the Definition of Disturb under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act**

**USFWS News Release 12/12/2006**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a draft environmental assessment of the definition of “disturb” under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act in today’s Federal Register, opening a 30-day public comment period. The Eagle Protection Act and this definition, if approved, will be used to manage the bald eagle if it is removed from the federal list of threatened and endangered species.

The draft environmental assessment made available today contains as its preferred alternative a definition of disturb similar to what was proposed in February. It has been revised for purposes of clarity. The revised definition reads as follows: “Disturb means to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to the degree that causes injury or death to an eagle (including chicks or eggs) due to interference with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or nest abandonment. Injury would be defined as “a wound or other physical harm, including a loss of biological fitness significant enough to pose a discernible risk to an eagle’s survival or productivity.”

" The recovery of the bald eagle and possible removal from the Endangered Species list is a great national success story," said H. Dale Hall, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "As we prepare to manage bald eagles under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the modified definition of disturb reemphasizes the management efforts that have proven so successful in recovering eagle populations. If the eagle is delisted, we plan to have a smooth transition in the management and protection under the Eagle Protection Act."

If removed from the list of threatened and endangered species, bald eagles will continue to be protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Both acts protect bald eagles by prohibiting killing, selling or otherwise harming eagles, their nests or eggs.

Last February, the Service proposed a regulation to clarify the term "disturb" under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and opened a public comment period on the proposal. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Service has prepared a draft environmental assessment (EA) on the proposed regulation and the proposed definition of “disturb.”

The draft EA is open for the public to comment for thirty days, and the comment period on the proposed definition is also re-opened for thirty days. To see the draft EA, visit the Service’s bald eagle website at <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/BaldEagle.html>

After public comment, the Service will publish the final definition of “disturb” and Bald Eagle Management Guidelines and intends to propose a rulemaking to establish criteria for issuance of a permit to authorize activities that would "take" bald eagles under the Eagle Protection Act. The Service will consider addressing the existing Endangered Species Act authorizations in that rulemaking, which if finalized may extend comparable authorizations under the Eagle Act.

Comments on the draft environmental assessment on the definition of “disturb” under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act must be received by 30 days after Federal Register publication. Comments should be sent to Chief, Division of Migratory Bird Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MBSP-4107, Arlington, VA 22203. Comments on the draft environmental assessment may also be transmitted electronically at [<baldeagle\\_proposedrule@fws.gov>](mailto:baldeagle_proposedrule@fws.gov).

## **IDNR News Bits 1/8/2007**

**2007 Licenses Available Jan. 15:** Illinois fishing, hunting and sportsmen combination licenses for 2007 will be available starting Jan. 15 from DNR Direct license and permit vendors, online through the IDNR web site or go directly to: <https://www1.wildlifelicense.com/il/start.php>, or by calling 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648). DNR Direct makes buying licenses, habitat stamps, and waterfowl stamps convenient and easy. By going online, license buyers can use American Express, Discover, MasterCard, Visa or E-Check and print the license or receipt – and the system is available 24 hours a day. The new IDNR license year begins April 1. The 2007 licenses purchased beginning Jan. 15 will be valid through Mar. 31, 2008.

**Special Edition of *OutdoorIllinois*:** The January 2007 issue of *OutdoorIllinois*, the IDNR monthly magazine, is devoted entirely to the threatened and endangered species of Illinois. This illustrated, one-of-a-kind magazine provides a comprehensive overview of rare plant and animal communities around Illinois. Featured plant and animal species and habitats include rare orchids and eared false-foxglove...cave amphipods, redspotted sunfish and Indiana bats...Algific slopes, fens, cliff communities and much more. *OutdoorIllinois* is an indispensable guide to Illinois' natural, cultural and recreational resources at \$15 for a one-year subscription. Call 1-800-720-3249 or visit <http://www.ilcf.org> to subscribe. VISA and MasterCard are accepted.

**Pere Marquette Bald Eagle Programs:** Have you ever seen our national bird, the bald eagle? Soaring on a 6 to 7-and-a-half foot wing span, eagles are magnificent. Pere Marquette State Park in Jersey County is host to these seasonal visitors.

Eagles may be spotted in the tree tops along the Illinois River throughout the winter. Join site staff at Pere Marquette State Park for informative programs about bald eagles this winter. All programs will begin at the park's visitor center at 8:30 a.m. with a short video presentation followed by an observational drive to view the wintering bald eagles. Dress warmly, have a full tank of gas, and bring binoculars. Dates for these bald eagle programs at Pere Marquette State Park are: Jan. 9, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31; Feb. 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 25, 27 and 28. Reservations are required. Please make reservations at 618/786-3323.

**NRAB Meeting:** The IDNR Natural Resources Advisory Board meets at 1 p.m. on Wed., Jan. 24 at the IDNR headquarters, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield. The meeting is open to the public. For more information, phone 217/785-0075.