



Grousin' Around the Mid-Atlantic

February 2009

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...Recent Happenings

Frederick MD Chapter Habitat and Winter Meeting

Monday, January 26, 2009 Over forty people attended this special annual meeting. Bob Long, Maryland's grouse biologist, gave a very informative program on grouse management efforts and populations in MD. Mark Banker gave an update on RGS's efforts both locally and nationally. Finally, Tim Flanigan presented his highly acclaimed grouse and grouse hunting slide program. After that, all attendees could not wait to get back out into the grouse woods again. For more information contact Dave Reichenbaugh at 240-344-1825 or email at mdruffedgrouse@yahoo.com.

Skylands Chapter, Sussex County, New Jersey Banquet

Saturday, January 31, 2009 For the ninth year in a row, Skylands held a successful banquet. Attendees were treated to great food, fun and a chance to renew old acquaintances. In addition to this banquet, this Chapter continues to do Habitat work days just about every month. For info on the next work day, contact Jim Desaye at 973-702-8380 or email at jjdesaye@yahoo.com.

South Mountain Chapter, Lancaster PA Banquet

Saturday, February 7, 2009 I am very pleased to report that the South Mountain Chapter is reorganized, reinvigorated and proud of the banquet just completed at Elstonville Sportsman's Association. Attendees enjoyed good food, drink and company! Funds were raised for grouse and woodcock habitat. For more information, contact George Criswell at 717-432-4062 or Doug Royer at 717-823-1253 or email at droyer@normandeau.com.

...Upcoming Events: Mark Your Calendar

February 2009

Cumberland Valley Chapter, Carlisle PA Committee Meeting

Monday, Feb. 16 - Discussion will focus on the upcoming banquet. All are welcome. For more information, contact Rodney Heininger at 717-921-2810 or email at reheininger@pa.net.

Red Brush Chapter, State College PA Committee Meeting

Monday, Feb. 16 - Discussion will focus on the upcoming banquet. All are welcome. For more information, contact Scott Rushe at 814-571-1039 or srushe@comcast.net.

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick MD Chapter Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 17 – (6 pm) Discussion will focus on the upcoming banquet and dog training seminar and fun trial. All are welcome. Contact Terry Oland at 301-874-5269 or email at terry.oland@comcast.net.

Pine Barrens Chapter, Jackson/Lakehurst NJ Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 19 - (7pm) (Clarksburg Inn, 465 Stagecoach Road, Clarksburg NJ) Everyone is welcome. Discussion will center on the upcoming banquet. For more information, contact Mark Dreyfus at 732-364-3809 or email at markd@netlabs.net.

Skylands Chapter, Sussex County, New Jersey Habitat Work Day

Sunday February 22 - Meet at Jumbo Land at 8:30 a.m. and drive back to the project site. All are welcome. For more information, contact Jim Desaye at 973-702-8380 or email at jjdesaye@yahoo.com.

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick MD Banquet

Saturday, February 28, 2009 - (Lynfield Event Complex) Cocktails, raffles and hors d'oeuvres at 6:00 pm, dinner at 7:30, games, raffles, live and silent auctions, great food, drink and conversation. Several donations have already been received including such things as an African safari, local preserve hunts, guided local grouse, waterfowl and woodcock hunts, rental cars, survival weekends and many more. For more information, contact Terry Oland at 301-874-5269 or email at terry.oland@comcast.net or Bob Lindgren at 301-253-4202 or email at bbjlin@aol.com.

March 2009

Cumberland Valley Chapter, Carlisle PA Committee Meeting

Monday, March 2, 2009 - Discussion will focus on the upcoming banquet and the sporting clays shoot. All are welcome. For more information, contact Rodney Heininger at 717-921-2810 or email at reheininger@pa.net.

Pine Barrens Chapter, Jackson/Lakehurst NJ Banquet

Saturday, March 7, 2009 - (Clarksburg Inn, 465 Stagecoach Road, Clarksburg NJ) Cocktails and raffles at 6:00pm, dinner at 7:30pm. Raffles, games, silent and live auctions, wonderful merchandise, great food, drink and camaraderie. For more information, contact Mark Dreyfus at 732-364-3809 or email at markd@netlabs.net.

Cumberland Valley Chapter, Carlisle PA Committee Meeting

Monday, March 9, 2009 - Discussion will focus on the upcoming banquet and the sporting clays shoot. All are welcome. For more information, contact Rodney Heiningger at 717-921-2810 or email at reheiningger@pa.net.

Red Brush Chapter, State College PA Committee Meeting

Monday, March 9, 2009 - Discussion will focus on the upcoming banquet. All are welcome. For more information, contact Scott Rushe at 814-571-1039 or srushe@comcast.net.

Cumberland Valley Chapter, Carlisle PA Banquet

Saturday, March 14, 2009 – (Carlisle Hotel and Convention Center, 1700 Harrisburg Pike, Carlisle PA) Cocktails and raffles at 6:00pm with dinner at 7:30pm. Raffles, games, silent and live auctions. Great food, drink and atmosphere. For more information, contact Rodney Heiningger at 717-921-2810 or email at reheiningger@pa.net.

Delaware Valley Chapter, Media, PA Committee Meeting

Monday, March 16, 2009 – (at the D’Antonio’s home, 7pm) Discussion will focus on the upcoming banquet. All are welcome. For more information, contact Jim or Connie D’Antonio at 610-722-9573 or email at jdacmd215@yahoo.com.

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick, MD Annual Dog Training Seminar and Fun Trial

Saturday, March 21, 2009 – (McKee Beshears WMA near Poolesville, MD) Morning seminars on various aspects of bird dog training followed by lunch and an afternoon fun trial. Presenters include the Potomac Chapter of NAVHDA and professional trainer and writer Stephen Rafe. Fun trial is along the lines of a “Chukar Challenge” with a little more emphasis on dog work. For more information contact John Thereault at 301-365-3038 or email at jcthereault@hotmail.com.

Red Brush Chapter, State College PA Banquet

Saturday, March 28, 2009 - (Penn State Conference Center and Hotel, 215 Innovation Blvd., State College, PA) Cocktails & raffles 5:30 pm; dinner 7:15 pm. Games, raffles, live and silent auctions, great food, drink and conversation. Several wonderful donations have already been received. For more information, contact Scott Rushe at 814-571-1039 or srushe@comcast.net.

South Mountain Chapter, Lancaster PA Grouse Challenge Sporting Clays Shoot

Saturday, March 28, 2009 – (Elstonville Sportsman’s Association) 8am, breakfast and registration; 9am, first shooters; 11:30am, lunch; last shooter, out by noon. Awards right after last shooter finishes. Course will be set up by our members and will feature 75 grouse type targets—challenging, close woods shots. Door prizes, random prizes, awards to top shooters. Lots of fun. For more information contact Jan Christen, 717-940-1483 or email at janchristen@utilitykeystone.com.

April 2009

Charles E. Bechtel Chapter, Reading PA Field and Habitat Day

Saturday, April 4, 2009 – (State Game Lands 110) 9am -2:30 pm. Tour of work already done, habitat discussion led by Mark Banker, RGS Senior Biologist. Light breakfast and lunch provided, actual work on deer enclosure. For more information contact John Cave at 610-693-5970 or email at cavescorner@comcast.net.

Delaware Valley Chapter, Media, PA Committee Meeting

Monday, April 6, 2009 – (at the D’Antonio’s home, 7pm) Discussion will focus on the upcoming banquet. All are welcome. For more information contact Jim or Connie D’Antonio at 610-722-9573 or email at jdacmd215@yahoo.com.

Glenn Bowers Chapter, York PA Field and Habitat Work Day

Saturday, April 18. 9am – (2:30pm) Planting of shrubs for wildlife habitat, discussion of woodcock management and biology by Senior RGS Biologist, Mark Banker. Lunch provided. For more information contact Mark Mummert at 717-795-9460 or email at mummenv@pa.net.

Delaware Valley Chapter, Media, PA Banquet

Thursday, April 23, 2009 – (Springfield Country Club, 400 West Sproul Road, Springfield, PA) Cocktails at 6pm; dinner at 7:30. Games, raffles, live and silent auctions, great food, drink and conversation. Several wonderful donations have already been received. For more information contact Jim or Connie D’Antonio at 610-722-9573 or email at jdacmd215@yahoo.com.

May 2009

Backbone Mountain Chapter, Oakland MD Sporting Challenge

Sunday, May 3, 2009 – (Wings of Challenge Preserve) Participants will be able to compete in either a Chukar challenge with their dogs and/or a Sporting clays shoot - a chance to see who can claim the crown as the local king of the bird hunters. More details to be announced soon. For more information contact Rich Skeweris at 301-334-5814 or email at rskeeweris@pennswoods.net.

Charles E. Bechtel Chapter, Reading PA Southeastern PA Sponsor Dinner

Wednesday, May 13, 2009 - Details to be announced.

June 2009

Cumberland Valley Chapter, Carlisle PA Sporting Clays Shoot

Saturday, June 6, Details to be announced.

Bonasa Chapter, Dubois PA Banquet

Friday, June 19, 2009 - Details to be announced

Note: Details on all upcoming events, except committee meetings, may be found on our website: www.ruffedgrousesociety.org.

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.

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, 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.

Thanks!

I would like add my personal thank you to all the volunteers out there who have spent their time and their own money to help us toward our goal of creating more habitat for grouse and woodcock. Without you we could not succeed! Right now we are succeeding. Please contact me with any questions or comments. If you are not currently on one of our committees, please consider joining one and give something back to the resource that has provided much enjoyment for us.