

Recommendations for Bear Management in Michigan

Report of the Michigan Bear Consultation Team
to the
Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources

December 2008

Michigan Bear Consultation Team Members

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Introduction

We, the Michigan Bear Consultation Team (BCT), present these recommendations to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to help guide the future management of black bear and bear-related issues. We ask the DNR to consider these recommendations, contained here within, in the development of a Bear Management Plan. We believe these recommendations represent the diverse interests of Michigan society and will best serve the management of black bear for years to come.

The Role of the Bear Consultation Team

The DNR recognizes that the citizens of Michigan have an interest and stake in the future management of bears and should have an opportunity for their points of view to be represented. To address this need, the DNR established the BCT. Our membership represents a diversity of stakeholder viewpoints and includes 18 agencies and organizations, including environmental and ecological interests, hunting interests, agricultural interests, public-safety interests, Tribes, and private land interests.

The BCT met on three occasions (five full days) to review, prioritize, and discuss bear management issues. We were expected to provide constructive comments and guidance to the DNR, and recommend potential solutions to bear management issues.

We understood that the Bear Management Plan, scheduled for completion by spring 2009, will be strategic in nature, and that our recommendations should be strategic as well. However, in some instances our recommendations were more operational in nature because we felt it was important to do so. We agreed to seek consensus on all recommendations being submitted to the DNR.

We understand the DNR has considerable latitude to select and implement specific methods for achieving strategic goals and objectives. We trust the DNR will, to the extent legal and practical, develop a strategic Bear Management Plan consistent with our recommendations. In the following sections, we have offered explanations to clarify our intent and thus ensure the correct interpretation of the recommendations. We appreciate having had this opportunity to shape the future of black bear management in Michigan.

A Shared Vision of Success for Michigan's Bear Management

We were asked to create a shared vision of success for Michigan's bear management program to guide our discussions and recommendation. The 18 member BTC, representing a diversity of stakeholders' interests, had little trouble agreeing to the following vision.

Our vision for successful bear management in Michigan is to cooperatively manage bear populations at biologically and socially acceptable levels using sound science and education so current and future generations can continue to value Michigan's bears.

Issues to address

The DNR provided us a list of fundamental management issues based on review of scientific literature, input from public meetings, and results of public attitude surveys. We were presented background information on each issue and asked to discuss and prepare a recommendation, if we wished. In most instances, we felt a recommendation was warranted, and for others the current policy and/or regulations seemed like the best approach for addressing the issue. There was only one issue where we could not agree and reach consensus. The following is the list of issues that were presented to us by the DNR.

- Bear Abundance and Distribution -- Direction is needed in balancing the desires of Michigan citizens and bear abundance.
Associated issues requiring guidance include those such as:
 - strategies to address BMU size and location
 - strategies to address changes in the landscape (impacts on bear habitat)
 - strategies to address recreation opportunities (hunting and wilderness experience)
 - strategies to address season structures and season dates
 - strategies to address baiting issues related to wildlife disease management

- User Conflicts -- Direction is needed to effectively address conflict that emerges among users regarding bear hunting opportunities.
Associated issues requiring guidance include those such as:
 - strategies to address trespass issues
 - strategies to address conflicts among users during bear hunting season (bait/dog hunter, guides, bear hunters and other hunting seasons)

- Human-Bear Conflicts -- Direction is needed to effectively address issues that emerge from the presence of bears including destruction of personal property, apiaries, orchards, and other agricultural crops and bear behavior creating public concerns for safety.
Associated issues requiring guidance include those such as:
 - appropriate policies regarding destruction of personal or business property due to bears
 - selection of intervention methods to avoid bear problems
 - strategies to direct the selection and use of methods to remove and/or control problem bears

- Information and Education -- Direction is needed regarding the importance and scope of outreach efforts as a means of managing bear-related issues.

Recommendations from the Bear Consultation Team

Bear Abundance and Distribution

Landscape/Habitat

Black bears are generally forest animals. Michigan has nearly 19 million acres of forest land, and approximately 65% is privately owned. Around 35,000 square miles of suitable bear habitat is located in the Upper Peninsula (UP) and Northern Lower Peninsula (NLP).

Land management practices within different forest cover types can impact available habitat for bears. Ownership patterns can also uniquely challenge bear management. In general, public lands consist of good bear habitat; whereas private lands vary in the quality of habitat they provide. Individual bears, especially males, have large home-ranges and seasonal movements of ten to twenty miles are common for black bears. Mature males have been known to move even greater distances during the breeding season.

We have a desire for current and future bear hunters to have access to huntable lands -- both public and private. Access is being reduced due to the loss of Commercial Forest lands, sale of private lands, road closures and habitat fragmentation. We also recognize that the loss of public land may impact the land base on which treaty rights may be exercised. We are also concerned about the loss of large blocks of land to parcelization, which impacts bear habitat, the distribution of bear on the landscape, and hunting opportunities

We understand the DNR is involved in numerous planning efforts, such as the Statewide Forest plan, Eco-regional Resource plans, the Wildlife Action Plan, and the Wildlife Division Habitat Plan. These plans should compliment one another and take into consideration the habitat needs of Michigan's black bear.

Recommendations:

In regard to access...

- We recommend the DNR continue to investigate and encourage incentives or programs that provide access to public and private lands for recreational use. These activities should include new levels of cooperation and communication between hunters, landowners, and the DNR.
- We recommend the DNR actively seek public involvement in decisions related to existing road closures and other actions that could change or hinder bear hunting access opportunities.

In regard to parcelization...

- We recommend the DNR continue to actively acquire and consolidate public lands and encourage conservation programs (easements, leases) that provide large blocks of accessible land.

In regard to habitat...

- We recommend the DNR consider bear habitat and bear population management when acquiring and consolidating lands.
- We recommend the DNR consider bear habitat and bear population management when crafting larger scale resource management plans.

Southern Michigan Bear Distribution

Black bear are common in the UP and areas of the NLP and are observed occasionally in the Southern Lower Peninsula (SLP); these SLP observations have become more frequent in recent years. There are many different viewpoints concerning bears and their potential expansion into southern Michigan; some citizens are favorable and others are more concerned about potential risks to bears and to the public. We recognize that bear moving into urban areas can be a public safety challenge and in some cases alarming to the local residents and dangerous to the bears. Education is one of the most important components in an information strategy that targets the public's acceptance for bears expanding into southern Michigan. The DNR response plan to problem bears in previously unoccupied habitat will also be critical in elevating public acceptance.

Recommendation:

- We recommend the bear population be allowed to expand naturally into southern Michigan to the extent that social acceptance allows. Proactive education should be aimed at developing tolerance among the public and understanding the value of the cost and benefits of living with bears.

Establishing Bear Population Goals

The DNR uses a combination of multiple population indices, estimators, and mathematical models to assess the bear population on a regional and statewide basis. The primary sources of data are derived from published literature, field surveys, mandatory registration of harvested bears, and an annual mail survey of bear hunters. Field surveys include historical radio-telemetry projects, bait station surveys, and additional research projects.

We understand the DNR establishes eco-regional population trend goals, which are recommended by DNR field personnel; determines desired regional harvests by population modeling; distributes licenses by BMU to achieve desired bear population levels in the Upper and northern Lower Peninsulas; and utilizes a preference point drawing system to issue bear hunting licenses each year.

No recommendation needed:

- We support the current DNR process for setting and establishing regional bear population trend goals. The team does not feel changes are necessary to this process.

Bear Management Unit (BMU) Size and Location

We understand the primary function of BMU boundaries is to distribute hunters and hunting harvests to achieve regional bear population management objectives. We also recognize that bears are not evenly distributed across the landscape and hunting effort occurs mostly where hunters perceive the population to be at the highest density. Some hunters have requested that the DNR reduce the size of some BMUs to address perceived issues of bear over-abundance on a local scale. Others contend that BMU boundaries should be representative of bear ecology and natural landscape features.

We believe the current process that the DNR uses for establishing BMUs, and the purpose that unit boundaries serve in managing Michigan's regional bear populations are acceptable. We also appreciate that there are isolated areas across the landscape where localized bear populations are not being addressed at the BMU level. However, we believe that consistent BMU boundaries, over time, are critical for population assessment and management, and changes to the BMU boundaries should be made by the DNR with extreme caution. Clearly defined boundaries for easy identification by hunters, biologists and law enforcement efforts are also important considerations.

The creation of new or additional BMUs in southern Michigan (areas presently closed to bear hunting) may also be necessary for management purposes as bear expand into this region of the state. Special consideration will need to be given to hunting methods and season dates to achieve desired bear harvests in a landscape dominated by private ownership, should the need occur.

We acknowledge there are vast differences in ecological land types, land ownerships, and bear densities across the state, and that research may be needed to understand these differences and how they impact local bear populations before specific management issues can be addressed. We recognize this as "mid-scale" management. We discussed mid-scale management opportunities and believe the DNR should have a protocol in place for situations when BMU tools are unsuccessful. We believe mid-scale management may be necessary for the health of the bear population and to enhance social tolerance for bears.

All management decisions should be based on the best available science. We recognize the importance of research in wildlife management and strongly encourage the DNR to conduct bear research, when deemed appropriate, to strengthen bear management in Michigan.

Recommendations:

- We recommend the DNR conduct a collaborative research project in NLP “Club Country” and surrounding areas. The project would examine local bear population dynamics and densities on both public and private lands. The intent of the study would be to understand habitat conditions and assess localized bear population management issues in the NLP. The “Club Country” has offered to partner with the DNR in a research project. We recognize this study may take several years to complete, but urge the DNR to begin the study within one year.
- We support bear research and believe it is an integral part of a successful bear management program. We recommend wildlife research remain a high priority to the DNR in order to help develop and implement regulations based on sound science.
- We recognize that BMU boundaries serve to distribute hunters and harvests, facilitate enforcement and provide for biological assessment of regional population trends. The DNR Bear Management Work Group should continue to consider local biological and social factors when recommending boundary unit changes.
- We recommend the DNR adopt an adaptive management framework for dealing with mid-scale (e.g., sub-BMU) management issues such as population over/under abundance, landowner conflicts, and depredation. The process (framework) should include the following:
 1. Verify the situation using scientific information and professional judgment.
 2. Understand how the situation links to regional population goals.
 3. Explicitly identify the negative consequences of the situation.
 4. Consult with Tribes and affected stakeholders on proposed actions.
 5. Implement an agreed upon mid-scale management approach that alleviates the negative situation.
 6. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of management techniques.

Preference Point System

As black bear populations have increased in Michigan, so has the interest of hunters. In 2000, the DNR created the preference point system to distribute limited licenses in a fair and equitable manner. Individuals who apply for a bear license receive a preference point each year they apply but are unsuccessful at drawing a license. Applicants with the greatest number of points for each BMU and hunt period are issued licenses. We understand there are individuals who would like the preference point system to be altered or removed altogether. We believe the current licensing system is fair and equitable to all hunters and has shown itself to be successful in distributing hunting opportunities.

No recommendation needed:

- We felt there was no compelling reason to recommend an adjustment or modification to the current preference point system.

Application Period

As part of the preference point system, hunters may submit an application between May 1 and June 1 each year. Hunters have indicated an earlier application period would provide them greater lead time to plan vacation time and plan their hunting activities. We recognize if the application period was any earlier in the year, it would hinder the DNR's ability to propose regulation changes, complete the NRC public input process, and print any changes in the bear application guide.

We felt that most hunters have an idea (given the number of preference points they have) if they are going to be drawn for a bear license in any given year. Furthermore, there is a 3rd hunt period in the UP where someone can draw a license generally every year. We believe it is important to provide the DNR adequate time to use the previous year's harvest data when formulating regulation changes and making license quota recommendations and, therefore, do not support an earlier application period.

No recommendation needed:

- We felt there was no compelling reason to recommend an adjustment or modification to the application period time frame.

No Kill Tag Bear License (Participation License)

We understand that in 1989, an Opinion of the Michigan Attorney General clarified that "A person shall not hunt bear without a bear license," and further "hunt and hunters means the pursuing, capturing, shooting, killing, or taking of wild animals, and including attempting to take a wild animal." The Attorney General concluded that all persons engaged in hunting—or pursuing—bear must possess a bear hunting license. This opinion also concluded "that any person who pursues a bear with dogs must have a valid bear hunting license ..., regardless of whether the individual is carrying a firearm, and regardless of whether the person intends to kill the bear or is merely engaged in the training of dogs." Based on this Opinion of the Attorney General, a valid license is required to actively participate in "pursuing" bears with dogs during the open season. For hunters not in possession of a valid kill tag, this license became known as a "participation license." In 2008 the reference to "participation license" was dropped and the license is now known as a "No Kill Tag Bear License." Currently, hunters pursuing bear are required to possess a no kill tag bear license or a bear license with a kill tag. This is a statutory requirement in Public Act 451 of 1994 and is not within the authority of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC).

We believe the No Kill Tag license requires clarification to facilitate hunter recruitment and consistent law enforcement. We understand individuals may be observers in the hunt without participating in the hunt (e.g., youth hunts), and we encourage their participation.

A hunting organization is currently working with state legislators to change the No Kill Tag license so it will be needed only by individuals who own or possess the dogs being used in a bear hunt. To support our vision, we believe it is imperative that hunter recruitment be supported and by limiting the need of a no kill tag license to certain individuals more youth or aging hunters may share in a bear hunt experience.

Recommendation:

- We recommend the DNR take the necessary steps to change the current participation (no kill tag) license so it is only required by individuals that own or possess dogs actively engaged in a bear hunt.

Bear Baiting

Baiting for bear is defined as, “a site where food or lure is placed that attracts bear.” Baiting may begin one month prior to the opening of bear hunting season. Prior to the opening day of the archery deer season (October 1) in the UP, baits may include up to 2 gallons of grains, fruits, vegetables, salt or minerals per bait station provided these materials are made inaccessible to deer. After October 1 these items may be used, provided hunters abide by deer baiting regulations (type, quantity and distribution of bait). Regulating bait is important in managing the spread of wildlife disease; this is particularly important with the discovery of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Michigan in August 2008. Baiting in the NLP may only be with those materials that do not attract deer.

The majority of Michigan bear hunters use bait to attract bears and improve harvest opportunities. Over 90% of Michigan bear hunters either hunt directly over a baited site, or use bait to attract bears to a specific site so they can be hunted with dogs.

Some individuals and special interest groups contend baiting bears habituates bears to human foods and thus increases the likelihood that individual bears will become a nuisance. Others contend bears that visit baits placed by hunters are less likely to survive or more likely to have negative associations with humans (hunters) at bait sites and are thus less likely to become a nuisance. Neither of these hypotheses has been tested, so we are uncertain that either claim is true.

Recommendations:

- We recognize bear hunting is a necessary management tool, and in Michigan baiting bear is an effective technique. In the event of a disease threat, the DNR should adjust baiting regulations to help reduce wildlife disease transmission.

No recommendations needed:

- We discussed the start date for baiting. We felt there was no compelling reason to adjust or modify the current regulation.

- We discussed the number of baits allowed per hunter. We felt there was no compelling reason to adjust or modify the current regulation.

Note: We discussed the use of barrels for baiting bear on public land, but the group could not agree on a recommendation. We recognize barrel baiting is legal on private land and it may reduce conflict between dogs and wolves. However, some of us felt there would be substantial impacts on the environment, such as litter and inappropriate use of Off-Road Vehicles on public lands, if barrels were allowed on public lands.

Recruitment and Retention of Hunters

As the number of participants in many recreational hunting opportunities continues to decline, we recognize the critical importance of hunter recruitment and retention. We understand the DNR Director has made this a priority by creating the multi-organizational Hunter Recruitment and Retention Work Group. We appreciate the Work Group's effort in passage of the Apprentice license and lowering of the hunting age. We also support the DNR's current youth hunting season opportunities.

We want future generations to appreciate and value the cultural significance of bears and believe active recruitment and retention efforts are crucial to achieve this goal. We recognize the importance of a sound conservation ethic and the role hunters play in perpetuating that ethic. In addition, hunters provide financial support for public land access and habitat management, which benefits all recreational users of these lands.

Recommendation:

- The DNR should *strongly* encourage and promote the recruitment and retention of hunters. Opportunities such as Apprentice hunting licenses, youth-only seasons, mentoring programs, and other retention and recruitment methods need to be reviewed and widely implemented.

User Conflicts

Trespass

Problems occur sometimes between private landowners and bear hunters using dogs. Bears have large home ranges and can potentially cross multiple parcels of land (both private and public ownerships) while being pursued by dogs. This can lead to conflicts between bear dog hunters and private land owners who do not want dogs or hunters on their property. We believe dog owners should be allowed to retrieve their dogs when they run onto private property. We also believe dog owners should be respectful of property owners and adhere to recreational trespass laws. We feel that an educational effort to inform both hunters and landowners of the laws concerning dogs and recreational trespass could help alleviate conflicts between these two groups.

No recommendation needed:

- We discussed the issue of trespass on private land. The team felt the current regulatory structure (Recreational Trespass law) requires no changes.

Recommendation:

- We recommend the DNR cooperatively educate hunters and landowners on trespass (rules, rights, and responsibilities). We would like recreational trespass guidelines to be included in the Bear Hunting Guide, with explicit definitions of requirements such as “posting,” “notification,” “permission,” “warning,” “right to retrieve,” and “penalties.”

Quiet Periods

Bear hunters may pursue bears with dogs except during spring and certain periods of the open bear hunting season. These periods of no bear dog activity are commonly referred to as “quiet periods”. Most bear hunters who use dogs will train their dogs during the summer and up to the start of the bear hunting season. In order to protect nesting birds and young wildlife during the time of year in which they are most vulnerable, a quiet period was established between April 15 and July 15; no dog training on game is permitted between those dates except on specially designated state lands or unless the dog handler receives a permit from the DNR to conduct a special hunting dog field trial.

Under current regulations in the UP, hunters may not pursue bears using dogs the first five days of the first hunt period. This quiet period was put in place to reduce potential conflicts between hunters using bait and hunters using dogs. However, in the NLP both methods are permitted simultaneously throughout the general one-week bear hunting season. Dogs are not permitted for hunting bear in the Red Oak BMU during the archery-only season (October 5 to 11 in 2008).

Conflicts between bait and dog hunters do occur occasionally on public lands. Hunters using bait sometimes claim that dogs chase bears off of their baits, while dog hunters claim that other factors, not their dogs, are the reason for decreased bear activity at an individual bait site. We recognize there is conflict or perceived conflict between these two groups. In order to minimize conflict, we discussed various quiet period and dog training opportunities.

Recommendations:

- We recommend in the Upper Peninsula adding a five-day quiet period (no running of bear dogs) prior to the start of the first hunt period. (The first 5-days of the season would also remain as a bait-only opportunity).
- We recommend in the Lower Peninsula adding a five-day quiet period (no running of bear dogs) prior to the start of the hunt season. We also recommend the first day of the LP hunt season be open to bait hunters only. We propose two

additional hunt days to be added to the end of LP firearm season, and these two days be for dog hunters only.

- We recommend all dog training begin on July 8th for the entire state.

Commercial Guiding on Public Lands

Some bear hunters hire a hunting guide. Hunters typically have an expectation that, for a fee or compensation provided to the guide, they will experience a quality hunt with an enhanced opportunity to harvest a bear. Guides can assist bear hunters in a number of ways including scouting for bear sign, finding a hunting location, providing dogs and setting and maintaining baits.

We realize there are situations where guides may cause conflict with other hunters. For example, an authorized representative for ten hunters could establish and maintain thirty total baits as per the regulation that allows a hunter or representative to tend up to three baits per hunter. The issue of “territoriality over bait sites” has the potential to be magnified further by commercial bear guides who may represent multiple clients and whose source of income is in part dependent on providing an undisturbed, quality hunting experience, often on public land. Similar issues may also arise for bear guides using dogs.

We would like current and future bear hunters to have access to bears and public lands, without unfair competition from commercial guiding operations. Where allowed, guiding operations must operate ethically and legally, without privatizing access to publicly-owned bears and hunting areas.

Recommendation:

- We recommend the DNR develop and implement licensure of hunting guides. Licensure should, at a minimum, address liability and performance bonding, safety and responsibility certification, and training in legal and ethical hunting requirements.

Human-Bear Conflicts

The issue of nuisance or problem bear management is complicated, and involves human behaviors and perceptions, as well as bear behavior. There is a wide range of public opinions as to what constitutes a bear problem, or a problem bear. To some, the mere presence of a bear is a perceived problem, while others may enjoy seeing bears on a regular basis.

We understand the presence of bears imposes more costs on some groups of Michigan citizens than others. These costs range from loss of equipment and products to anxiety over the presence of bears in residential or recreational areas. In particular, we recognize there is conflict between bears and beekeeping operations. We value the importance of

honey bees for pollination of agricultural crops. Therefore, minimizing nuisance problems between bears and apiaries is critical.

When bear incidents do occur, the DNR has response protocols outlined in the *Michigan Problem Bear Management Guidelines*. Responses range from providing technical assistance to landowners, to physically removing a bear, to euthanizing individual bears when public safety is threatened. The information in this guidance document is part of an educational effort that informs personnel from DNR Law Enforcement, Wildlife, and Office of Lands and Facilities staff, as well as local law enforcement agencies and emergency dispatchers, and in some unique cases, zoos or accredited rehabilitation facilities on how best to deal with a wide range of negative bear situations. We feel this Guidance document, which is an internal DNR document, is appropriate for handling most issues; however, there seem to be discrepancies in the DNR staff's use of the policy and we believe the DNR needs additional training in the procedures associated with human-bear conflicts. There are cases where DNR staff has been inconsistent in their interpretation of these guidelines when handling problem bears, especially in bear-apiary situations.

We support partnership opportunities where agricultural growers and apiarists are coupled with hunters who may help with harvesting bears in problem areas. We hope the DNR can identify those partners and facilitate these relationships.

We recognize there are situations where human-bear conflicts may be avoided if certain deterrents or other aversive products are used. Therefore, we believe that the development of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for beekeeping would lessen negative bear/apiary situations. We believe there is an opportunity for the Michigan Beekeepers' Association, Farm Bureau, and the DNR to develop these BMPs. Once developed, these BMPs should be part of the *Michigan Problem Bear Management Guidelines*. Also, we recognize there may be instances where a permit to apiarists to kill a problem bear may be appropriate. This should be done in a consistent manner across the State.

We believe it is important the DNR be supportive of landowners who may be dealing with problem bear situations, and provide guidance on the types of tools that may be available for lessening impacts of bears on agriculture.

We recognize there are instances when humans are the source of human-bear conflicts. For instance, supplemental feeding of wildlife involves the deliberate placement of foods for the purpose of enhancing wildlife viewing opportunities or augmenting naturally occurring food resources. Supplemental feeding is not advised by the DNR because of the potential for habituating bears and increasing the likelihood of individual bears becoming involved in negative bear-human interactions. We are familiar with situations where restaurants place food to attract bears as a tourism attraction. This is unacceptable. We are opposed to any human behaviors that habituate bears to humans. In almost all habituated situations, the bear will have to be euthanized due to public safety concerns.

Recommendations:

- We recommend the DNR Law Enforcement and Wildlife Division staff meet periodically to discuss the Problem Bear Management Guidelines to ensure they are consistently applied. The DNR should also develop educational materials that clearly communicate these Guidelines to the public.
- We recommend the DNR facilitate communication between partners such as Farm Bureau, interested landowners, and bear hunters to help address human-bear conflicts. Landowners will retain all rights of hunter selection and access.
- We recommend the DNR, in cooperation with partners such as the Michigan Beekeepers' Association, develop Best Management Practices related to bear and bee management.
- We recommend the DNR should provide timely and professional responses to bear/beehive depredation.
- We acknowledge there is a conflict between bear and apiaries and strongly urge the DNR to develop bear control permitting protocols to address these situations.
- We recommend a legal framework be created to prohibit all recreational feeding of bears.

Information and Education

Information and Education is a major component within any management plan; however it is often overlooked. We believe the DNR should give high priority to planning and implementing an effective information and education communication strategy regarding bears. The strategy should identify audiences (internal and external), informational messages, and tools used to deliver messages. We recognize there are countless opportunities for the DNR to partner with many organizations to help deliver these messages. An important component of this effort should include a regular needs assessment and an evaluation of program effectiveness.

An Information and Education program should:

- Educate about bear ecology.
- Educate about the benefits and risks associated with bears.
- Educate about trespass laws.
- Inform individuals how to reduce risks of human-bear conflicts.
- Provide educational information to local law enforcement officials on how to deal with urban bear situations.
- Disseminate information on current and past research programs related to bears and bear management.
- Create partnerships to assist in the dissemination and presentation of bear information.

Recommendations:

We recommend the DNR provide timely information to support bear-related education and management efforts.

We recommend the DNR create, coordinate, and evaluate the effectiveness of a comprehensive bear management communication strategy.

We, the members of the Bear Consultation Team, as the designated representatives of our respective agencies and organizations, reached consensus on all of the preceding recommendations and hereby certify we support the information set forth in this report.

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Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians

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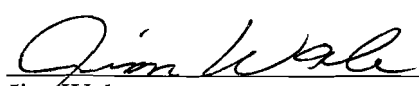
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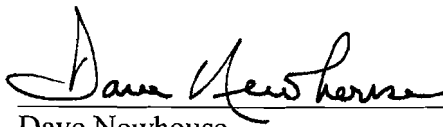
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Wayne Sitton
Turtle Lake Club

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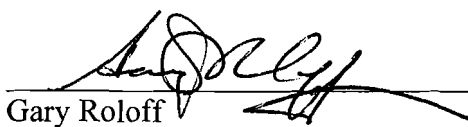
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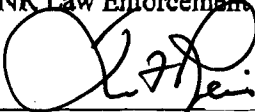
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John Cishke
DNR Law Enforcement Division

Date



12/04/08

Tim Reis
DNR Wildlife Division

Date

Miles Falck
Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission

Date

Bill Walker
Michigan Bear Hunters Association

Date

Larry Hilbert
Michigan Bee Keepers Association

Date

Ron Eurick
Michigan Bowhunters

Date



12/03/08

Rick Gleason
Michigan Farm Bureau

Date

Mike Thorman
Michigan Hunting Dog Federation

Date

We, the members of the Bear Consultation Team, as the designated representatives of our respective agencies and organizations, reached consensus on all of the preceding recommendations and hereby certify we support the information set forth in this report.

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Dec. 3, 2008

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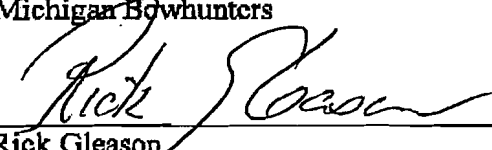
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Michigan Longbow Association

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Tilman L. Crutchfield
Sheriff Tilman Crutchfield
Michigan Sheriff's Association

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Ben Bartlett
Michigan State University Extension

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Jim Wale
Michigan United Coonhunters Association

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Bill Krepps
Michigan United Conservation Clubs

Date

Wayne Sitton
Turtle Lake Club

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Joe Hudson
Upper Peninsula Bear Houndsmen Association

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