

MICHIGAN WILDLIFE COUNCIL

Here. For Generations. Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Michigan Wildlife Council (MWC)?

The Michigan Wildlife Council is a nine-member public body established by Public Act 246 of 2013. Members are appointed by the governor and subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. The nonpartisan all-volunteer panel was created by the Legislature to direct the expenditures of the Michigan Wildlife Management Public Education Fund, which is dedicated to informing the state's residents about the beneficial aspects of wildlife conservation and management.

What is the Here. For Generations. campaign about?

It is Michigan's first-ever campaign to promote awareness and education about the importance of scientific wildlife conservation and management.

Why is this campaign necessary?

Many Michigan residents have the mistaken belief that our state's wildlife and natural environment manage themselves or that it's simply an "Up North" issue that does not impact them or their community. The MWC believes the more Michiganders know how wildlife conservation and scientific management benefits activities they love – such as camping, canoeing, hiking, swimming or bird-watching – they will better appreciate that wildlife conservation is essential to preserving Michigan's great outdoors for future generations.

Does research exist that supports the need for the MWC education campaign?

Yes. A statewide survey MWC commissioned was conducted July 24-31, 2015, to measure public opinion, understanding and level of engagement toward the state's wildlife management activities shows that:

- Across Michigan, 90 percent of the population believes it is important to keep wildlife healthy and free of disease.
- At least 88 percent of the state's citizens agree it's important to protect Michigan's wildlife species from becoming endangered or extinct.
- However, 61 percent of Michiganders either do not believe or are unsure whether wildlife requires management by humans to survive and thrive.
- Most people in Michigan are unaware the majority of wildlife conservation activities is funded by revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses – 91 percent of the state's residents either don't know or mistakenly believe wildlife management is funded with state taxpayer dollars.
- The lack of understanding is particularly prevalent in West Michigan approximately 36 percent of the region's population say they are uncertain if wildlife requires human management to survive.
- Similarly, in Southeast Michigan, where approximately 40 percent of the region's citizens say they are either neutral about or not interested in wildlife.

The survey included a sample of 800 people with a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percent.

What is wildlife conservation?

To ensure that the wildlife that populates Michigan's waters and forests continue to thrive, Michigan uses scientifically based conservation and management methods. And while wildlife management is a complex process, the ultimate aim is to protect, maintain or restore wildlife populations, spur sustainable recreation use and enjoyment and support natural resource-based economies.

What are examples of Michigan conservation managers' responsibilities?

In Michigan, examples of the state's conservation managers' responsibilities range from stocking baby walleye and preserving their habitats near Beaver Island and protecting endangered ospreys from near extinction in southeast Michigan's Huron Valley to measuring the impacts of climate change on West Michigan fisheries, overseeing construction of new pump stations that help manage wetlands along the Saginaw Bay, monitoring the health of deer herds in the northern Lower Peninsula and harvesting trees in the Upper Peninsula.

Why is wildlife conservation important?

Conservation managers strives for a balance that benefits public, private and wildlife interests. This important work helps to create a heritage that instills within individuals a personal connection to Michigan and its natural beauty. The research, analysis and regulatory field work conducted by Michigan's wildlife conservation managers is key to maintaining and improving the state's habitats that allow wildlife to survive and thrive. The future of Michigan's tourism industry, for example, is tied to nurturing the state's world-class wildlife assets and extensive, high-quality natural resource base. Michigan's conservation managers are vital to protecting our natural environments, public health, scenery and our economy.

Does wildlife conservation impact Michigan's economy?

Yes. Ranking fourth nationwide, the Great Lakes State's nearly 2 million hunters and anglers spend approximately \$5 billion annually and support almost 73,000 jobs, data from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shows. Wildlife watching contributes another \$1.2 billion to Michigan's economy, according to the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

How is the Michigan Wildlife Council's Here. For Generations. campaign funded?

A new license fee structure established in 2014 by the Michigan Legislature requires the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to use \$1 from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses to fund the MWC campaign. The \$1 share of each license sale generates approximately \$1.6 million annually in revenue that is geared toward promoting awareness and education of Michigan's wildlife and outdoor heritage.

How is the MWC promoting the Here. For Generations. campaign?

The Michigan Wildlife Council's statewide education push features television ads – which can be viewed at www.HereForMiOutdoors.org – complemented by billboards, radio, social and digital ads.

When does the campaign begin and how long will it occur?

The campaign officially launches Thursday, April 14, 2016, with a press conference at the state Capitol in Lansing that coincides with the kickoff of Michigan Wildlife Council's statewide education and marketing activities. Michigan's 2016 launch of its inaugural Here. For Generations. campaign represents the start of a five-year statewide education effort.