

MICHIGAN WILDLIFE COUNCIL
SEMIANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Approved by the Chair of the Michigan Wildlife Council on November 30, 2020.

The following report is the twelfth semiannual report submitted to the Legislature documenting activities of the Michigan Wildlife Council (MWC).

As mandated by 2013 PA 246, the mission of the MWC is to develop and implement, in conjunction with a third-party marketing or advertising agency, a comprehensive media-based public information program to promote the essential role sportsmen and sportswomen play in furthering conservation via wildlife management and to educate the general public about hunting, fishing, and the taking of game. Scientific wildlife management practices are essential for maintaining healthy ecosystems across the state, and these activities receive most of their funding from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and the equipment used to participate in these activities. The mission is funded by a \$1 surcharge on all Michigan base hunting and fishing licenses.

The MWC has contracted with Gd Marketing of Lansing to develop and implement the marketing campaign. Extensive research and a baseline survey conducted in 2015 were used by the MWC and Gd Marketing to identify the campaign slogan, "Here. for Generations." as the umbrella for the Council's initial work.

This activity period began with a cessation of MWC activities as of April 10, 2020, in accordance with the Governor's Executive Directive 2020-3, issued March 30, due to COVID-19 restricting State discretionary expenditures to essential activities identified in the Directive. The media campaign that was scheduled to begin May 2020 was paused. Gd marketing was notified they could relaunch activities beginning on June 1. The campaign was back in market on July 1.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, public activities that were being planned were put on hold. Emphasis was placed on digital media, social media and content.

Gd Marketing continues to employ a wide variety of methods to distribute information to the target audience for the "Here. For Generations." campaign. These include more traditional messaging efforts such as roadside billboards, television commercials, online articles, and TV and radio interviews. Newer methods include digital ads and social media ads through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

The promotional goals for this period are to:

- Promote the essential role sportsmen and sportswomen play in furthering conservation
- Educate the general public about hunting, fishing and the taking of game

From January 1, 2020 through April 10, 2020, the campaign generated over 17,736,847 impressions and 189,958 engagements (clicks to websites, likes, shares, videos, and views).

With the restart of the program on July 1 there was a 132% increase in website visitors from June to July. Southeast Michigan drove the highest website traffic volumes and engagement, with Ann Arbor notably leading the area for engagements. The top five geographic locations (as a percentage of overall website traffic) are:

- Detroit – 25%
- Grand Rapids – 7%
- Ann Arbor – 6%
- Royal Oak – 3%
- Livonia – 2%

A fishing quiz (published early July) produced better results over last year's quiz. In 2019, the quiz received 5,000 reads, compared with 19,000 this year.

AMC and HGTV were top networks among those providing our video via digital video-streaming platforms.

A broad awareness strategy is ongoing with assets including two 30-second videos running on social media platforms and through digital video streaming. In addition, seven billboards can be seen at dozens of sites across the state. The billboards convey both emotional messages tied to memories and experiences and factual and educational messages tied to the prosperity of the state

With 2020 being a Presidential election year, the media awareness campaign was reduced and reemerged on November 9, after the election but prior to firearm deer season. This effort is focused on the "funding" message. A "microcampaign" effort includes content news stories, TV segments, digital display and paid social media, all working in tandem to encourage users to learn more about the benefits of hunting and fishing (to Michigan's economy, to wildlife, to management and to people).

Planned experiential opportunities include a photo contest, inclusion in Detroit's Thanksgiving Day Parade, and a virtual "By Land & By Lake" tour. To reach key influencers, the campaign will work with Crain's Detroit Business to conduct a panel discussion focused on the benefits of hunting and fishing to Michigan. Finally, a dedicated effort to reach sportsmen and sportswomen will continue through the end of the year.

Beginning with the 2020 survey, and likely into subsequent years, MWC has chosen to work with Responsive Management, the industry leader in public sentiment research. A review of the survey's proposed methodology will allow for collection of the data necessary to increase the campaign's messaging effectiveness and reach while allowing for a trend analysis of important data points from past surveys. The recommendation is to field a telephone survey of adult Michiganders using two different sampling frames:

- Statewide telephone survey of 800 people, using a probability-based sample with demographic goals by population in each of six regions.
- Supplemental telephone survey to gather an additional 200-300 responses to ensure enough respondents from key audience groups such as young adults, black Michiganders and those living in urban centers of Southeast Michigan.

In September, MWC Chairman Nick Buggia made a presentation to the Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus.

His presentation included: the purpose of the campaign, the messages, and the target audiences. He walked through some of the creative pieces and explained the rationale behind the messaging and the progression over the past few years to a more direct message. His presentation also explained the progress that has been made in audience understanding as demonstrated in the annual statewide surveys.

Nick's presentation also included a description of the strategies for summer and fall 2020. Finally, he explained that the message is being expanded to demonstrate the impact of hunting and fishing on the economy and that MWC is increasing the messaging to sportsmen and women, aiming to create additional ambassadors.

The MWC continues to seek ongoing opportunities to keep stakeholders, legislators, and the public informed of its progress. Attached is the schedule of media appearances and articles organized by G&D Marketing.

The current council includes:

Nick Buggia, (Chair) Mayville
Matt Pedigo, Howell
Jason Garvon, Brimley
Ed Roy, Traverse City
Hank Stancato, Detroit
Kristin Phillips (Treasurer, DNR director's designee)
Jeff Poet, Clare
Beth Gruden, Perrinton
T. Elliot Shafer, Grosse Pointe Woods

The MWC appreciates the Legislature's continued support and the opportunity to report on its activities since April 2020.

Respectfully,



Nick Buggia, Chair
Michigan Wildlife Council

In compliance with Section 43532b(18)(b) of PA 246 of 2013, the Michigan Wildlife Council provides the following summary of Fiscal Year 2020 expenditures for the Michigan Wildlife Management Public Education Subaccount that was created within the Game and Fish Protection Account.

Fiscal Year 2020 Expenditures for the Michigan Wildlife Council
(October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020)

Expenditure Description	Amount
Research/Marketing/Creative/Media	\$1,185,000
<u>Administrative</u>	<u>2,000</u>
Total Expenditures	\$1,187,000

Michigan Wildlife Council Media Appearances

April 2020 – September 2020

Content Marketing Articles

[Reel Challenge: Take our quiz to test your knowledge about Michigan fish](#)

Detroit Free Press

July 1, 2020

[Reel Challenge: Take our quiz to test your knowledge about Michigan fish](#)

Detroit News

July 1, 2020

[Fishing helps father, daughter bond while isolating during pandemic crisis](#)

Detroit Free Press

August 14, 2020

[Fishing helps father, daughter bond while isolating during pandemic crisis](#)

Detroit News

August 14, 2020

[Grayling are poised for a comeback in Michigan](#)

Detroit Free Press

September 8, 2020

[Grayling are poised for a comeback in Michigan](#)

Detroit News

September 8, 2020

[Explore Michigan's outdoors with Nature at Home](#)

Metro Parent

September 30, 2020

Media Interviews (Videos)

Media face to face interviews were severely restricted due to restrictions of the COVID-19 emergency orders.

[Importance of hunting and fishing in Michigan](#)

FOX47 Morning Blend
October 28, 2020