

MICHIGAN WILDLIFE COUNCIL
SEMIANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE
Public Act 451 of 1994, Section 43532b(18)(b)

Approved by the Chair of the Michigan Wildlife Council on October 27, 2023.

The following is the semiannual report to be submitted to the Legislature documenting activities of the Michigan Wildlife Council (MWC or Council) for the second half of Fiscal Year (FY) 2023.

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 through wildlife management and to educate the public about hunting, fishing, and the taking of game. This includes educating the public that hunting and fishing are:

- Necessary for conservation and management of Michigan's natural resources.
- A valued and integral part of the cultural heritage of this state.
- An important part of the state's economy.

The mission is funded by a \$1 surcharge on all Michigan base hunting and fishing licenses.

The MWC has contracted with GÜD Marketing of Lansing to develop and implement a marketing campaign. Extensive research and a baseline survey of Michigan's residents conducted in 2015 were used to set the foundation for the Council's work. Each year, a subsequent survey is used to measure changes in understanding and to refine the objectives for the next year. The campaign for 2022/2023 will run until November 30, 2023, and was focused on delivering key campaign messages to the target audience (ages 18-34, female and located in the Southern Lower Peninsula). The communications strategy for this year's message was to communicate the benefits of well-managed wildlife populations and showcase the role professional managers play in sustaining a healthy outdoors and create new connections to wildlife management through trusted influencers.

The tactics used for the 2023 campaign include outdoor, social media, video streaming, and sponsorships. This year's campaign included a new character, Jackie, who is Annette's new intern. These two characters work together to bring a fun and lighthearted approach to make connections with our audience about wildlife management. Video with these two characters include long versions with conservation experts, but also :06, :15, and :30 spots. The 30 second spots are used for Instagram, Facebook, and video streaming platforms, and the 6 second spots are used on Snapchat. The MWC media strategy included utilizing high-profile TV and digital video ads that guaranteed views of the "Annette and Jackie" campaign, which is designed to appeal to the target audience. So far, the campaign ads have been seen over 51 million times and have reached over 1.3 million people within our targeted audience.

The MWC partnered with the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy to sponsor a mural at Dequindre Cut Greenway in the heart of Detroit to catch the community's attention in a familiar outdoor space. There are eight separate panels (total size 16' long x 49' wide) and each one features Michigan-managed wildlife in a white frame that the community can autograph or write notes on as they stop to admire the art. The unique artwork was created by Detroit-based artist and muralist Ed Irmen. Harvest Fest was held at Dequindre Cut on October 7 & 8. It is a huge event that attracts 60 – 70,000 people each year. The mural was autographed, a survey was filled out by 311 people in hopes of winning a prize, and many, many more families and individuals just stopped to pick up stickers and cards. The mural will be up for an entire year and has the potential to reach 3 million people. "Our partnership with the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy unites the mutual goals of the two organizations to increase awareness of the

important work being done to preserve and enhance outdoor space,” stated Nick Buggia, chair of the Michigan Wildlife Council.

Content partnerships, influencers and advocates, and earned and owned outreach were used to create connections. The Michigan Chronicle is going to promote Salmon in the Classroom (a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) educational program with the schools) in a series of videos and print in market in October – April of next year. They will be showing the process of nurturing and releasing salmon into the wild.

To deepen understanding of our mission, we used content marketing, email, and social media. The tactics used include social influencers, content partnerships, earned media, and outreach to advocates.

A good example of “earned media” was set in July of this year for Wildlife Conservation Month. The MWC sent out a press release that resulted in seven stories across Michigan by some of the state’s largest news outlets. Coverage reached over 2.7 million individuals.

There is also a quarterly email newsletter sent to a list of conservation partners and advocates. The email list of recipients includes Michigan United Conservation Club, National Wildlife Turkey Federation, and the DNR. This provides partners with quarterly updates on MWC communication efforts. A conservation toolkit was also shared that contained social media and email content for partners to help promote MWC messaging.

The council continued to partner with the Mike Avery Radio show and the Michigan Out-of-Doors Magazine to promote wildlife and conservation messaging.

To learn more about conservation efforts in Michigan, including how they benefit from hunting and fishing, visit the Michigan Wildlife Council at HereForMiOutdoors.org.

The current council includes:

Nick Buggia, (Chair) Mayville
Jason Garvon, Brimley
Ed Roy, Traverse City
Jon Spieles (Treasurer, DNR director’s designee)
Brent Pike, Grand Haven
Beth Gruden, Perrinton
Sarah Topp, Wallace
T. Elliot Shafer, Grosse Pointe Woods
Franklin Hayes, West Bloomfield

The MWC appreciates the Legislature’s continued support and the opportunity to report on its activities since May 2023.

Respectfully,



Nicholas Buggia, Chair
Michigan Wildlife Council

In compliance with Section 43532b(18)(b) of PA 451 of 1994, the Michigan Wildlife Council provides the following summary of Fiscal Year 2023 expenditures for the Michigan Wildlife Management Public Education Subaccount that was created within the Game and Fish Protection Account.

Fiscal Year 2023 Expenditures for the Michigan Wildlife Council
(October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023)

Expenditure Description	Amount
Research/Marketing/Creative/Media	\$1,349,500
<u>Administrative</u>	<u>3,200</u>
Total Expenditures	\$1,352,700

Michigan Wildlife Council Media Appearances

May 2023 – October 2023

Media Articles

[MI Wildlife Council releases its top 10 success stories on its tenth anniversary](#)

Michigan Radio

July 3, 2023

[Gov. Whitmer proclaims July as Michigan Wildlife Conservation Month](#)

Mid-Michigan NOW/News Channel 3

July 3, 2023

[Mich. Wildlife Council marks a decade, releases top 10 successes](#)

Interlochen Public Radio

July 3, 2023

[Michigan's top ten wildlife conservation success stories](#)

Oakland County Times

July 3, 2023

[Michigan Wildlife Council issues first ever top ten success stories](#)

WCMU Public Radio

July 5, 2023

[Here's how Dequindre Cut murals are highlighting Michigan's urban wildlife in Detroit](#)

Click On Detroit

August 21, 2023

[Muralist pays colorful tribute to Michigan wildlife along Dequindre Cut](#)

Detroit Metro Times

August 22, 2023

[Conservation Benefits All Michiganders](#)

August 10, 2023

[Colorful 'Big Reveal' highlights weekend's Detroit Harvest Fest](#)

Social House News

October 9, 2023