

The Rooster Review

VOLUME 8—ISSUE 1

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STEARNS COUNTY CHAPTER
OF
PHEASANTS FOREVER

DATES TO REMEMBER

Walleye, Sauger, Northern Pike
2014 Season
May 10, 2014 - February 22, 2015

Smallmouth Bass (Catch and
Release Only; Statewide)
September 8, 2014-February 22,
2015

Pheasant Hunting Season
October 11, 2014-January 4, 2015

2015 Spring Wild Turkey Season
Application Deadline
January, 9 2015

2015 Minnesota State Convention
January 30-31

2015 Stearns PF Banquet
March 7, 2015

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2015 SCPF Annual Banquet— March 7th

The Stearns County Pheasants Forever Chapter knows how important our annual banquet is to help accomplish our goal for increased wildlife habitat. This year's banquet will be held on Saturday, March 7 at the Freeport Community Center. Since 1983, the Stearns County Chapter has raised over \$4 Million for conservation and wildlife habitat projects. The doors will open at 5:30 p.m. for the traditional "Crowing Hour," with dinner and prizes starting at 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$55 which includes a one year

membership to Pheasants Forever, dinner and door prizes. Bring a guest for only an additional \$35 or a



**Stearns County
Pheasants Forever
2015 Banquet
Saturday, March 7, 2015**

Ringneck membership (under 18) for FREE!! Walk-ins are also welcome. "Guns are back again this year," says SCPF President Steve Sellnow. Banquet attendees will have the opportunity to

win several guns during the banquet. "The annual banquet is our chapters major fundraiser for the year. This year is a critical time when we are seeing huge losses of habitat acres on private lands in Stearns County." Says Steve. "Plan to attend on March 7th and support your chapter efforts with this habitat decline." The banquet offers many other prizes that can be won through raffle tickets, games, silent auction and the live auction. Prizes include guns, wildlife prints and much more! Sellnow says, "One of the great things about

Continued on Page 3...

The New Generation of Upland Game: Pheasant Summit

December 13, 2014
Marshall, MN

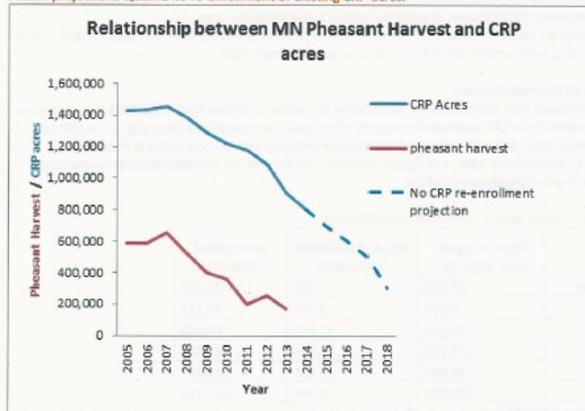
Pheasants Forever Inc. was founded in 1982 by concerned individuals who were alarmed at the steady erosion of habitat and pheasant populations. Pheasants Forever in one of their first major initiatives – took the lead by securing new funding for pheasant habitat by getting legislative approval for the MN-DNR Game and Fish Fund through a new MN Pheasant Habitat Stamp.

Pheasants Forever continued their work by engaging landowners and stakeholders into

activities. Then in the mid 1980's the US Congress passed a new provision in the federal Farm Bill called the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). This new conservation program was established to set aside highly erodible lands to help farmers/landowners prevent soil erosion and improve water quality. These "set aside" lands were required to put a grassy cover on the land for a period of 10 - 15 years depending on the practice.

Continued on Page 2...

Figure 2. Because CRP is so large relative to other programs, CRP has largely driven pheasant harvests in recent years. Future projections assume no re-enrollment of existing CRP acres.



forming new chapters throughout MN and then soon spread to neighboring states as well. These newly formed chapters helped to raise money for local conservation projects and

Habitat Highlight



Large Beardtongue *Penstemon grandiflorus*

Large Beardtongue, also called Shell-Leaf Penstemon or Large Flowered Penstemon, is considered to be one of Minnesota's finest native wildflower. This beautiful perennial forb is 12 to 40 inches tall and found scattered across Minnesota.

Large Beardtongue blooms between May and June, and is distinguished by its pink to lavender bell-shaped flowers that are about two inches long

This native wildflower attracts a vast amount of different pollinators during the apex of the pheasant hatch, when the chicks diet solely consists of insects.



If you are looking to add some additional color and wildlife benefit to a CRP planting or flower garden, consider this beautiful native flower.

Check Us Out On the Web
www.stearnsfpf.org

Pheasant Summit

Continued from page 1

As these new CRP acres began to take shape it did not take long before we began to see a “re-emergence” of the pheasant and other upland game populations. In some areas these increases were dramatic. Fast forward to 2010 or so... Farmers began to see sharp rises in commodity prices in corn and soybeans (these increases were due to many factors). Because of this; farmers began pulling out CRP acres and returning those “marginal” farmlands back into production. The trends and pressure to put more land back into agricultural production has had a devastating effect on pheasant and other upland game populations due to this loss of habitat. A new movement is now underway to address this latest trend of habitat loss and

declining pheasant populations. MN Governor Mark Dayton announced this past fall the formation of a “MN Governor’s Pheasant Summit” to help identify and address this trending loss of habitat and declining pheasant populations. On Saturday December 13, 2014 Governor Dayton and nearly 300 stakeholders – many of them PF members and leaders – attended this “summit” in Marshall MN. What was significant about this summit was the participation in these discussions by various agricultural groups and interest – this was truly amazing to see. One of the main questions; how can we address the loss of grasslands (which have multiple benefits) while at the same time understanding the needs of the agricultural producer and the role that both

agriculture and outdoor recreation activities have on the state’s economy and quality of life. 90-95% of all wildlife are born and raised on private lands. For this summit to have measureable outcomes; we need to address the loss of “CRP type lands” on private lands and provide a framework of private and public land initiatives that produce the greatest wildlife benefits and long term solutions. We have entered into a new generation of wildlife/natural resource conservation and it will take a “new” generation of conservation leadership to move this forward. Conservation and agricultural leaders are ready and willing to work together.

Brad Cobb – SCPF Public Relations Director

Read More on the [Pheasant Summit](#)

2014 Minnesota Deer Harvest Statistics

The total number of deer killed at the end of this year’s firearms season is down 31,000 compared to 2013, state figures show. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has revealed that hunters had registered 111,000 deer by the end of the third and final weekend of firearms hunting season.



Overall, 127,000 deer have been registered this year, which includes special hunts and archery season, and earlier antlerless and firearms seasons, down from 160,000 in 2013. These figures do not include the state’s muzzleloader season which started on November 29th and ran until December 14th. Also not included is the last month of the archery season which ended on December 31st. The Minnesota DNR expects the final harvest numbers to be somewhere between 130,000 and 140,000.

This year’s harvest was expected to be lower, the News Tribune reports, because the DNR had put in place tighter restrictions on the number of deer allowed to be killed in a bid to boost the



population across the state. Numbers were depleted after a big harvest last year and an extreme winter.

Frank White (13) of Sauk Rapids with his first deer.

Restrictions have made the season

more competitive, but it got ultra-competitive in Wisconsin, where a coin flip had to decide who would keep a deer shot on private land. In spite of the smaller deer harvest, the Star Tribune reports a central Minnesota meat market has been kept busy in November. McDonald’s Meats, in Clear Lake, told the newspaper it had to suspend much of the beef and hog processing in the two weeks after the firearms hunting opener, during which time it processed around 450 deer and took on an extra five staff to cope with the demand.

By: Adam Uren

2015 SCPF Annual Banquet cont...

the Pheasants Forever Organization is that the money raised locally is used for local conservation projects.” These locally raised funds have leveraged State and Federal funds resulting in 34 Wildlife Management Areas or Wildlife Production Areas encompassing over 4,700 acres. Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are part of Minnesota’s outdoor recreation system and are established to protect those lands and waters that have a high potential for wildlife production, public hunting, trapping, fishing, and other compatible recreational uses. The Stearns County Pheasants Forever Chapter does more than just acquire public hunting land.

We also support a full-time Pheasants Forever biologist, Joe Orr. Joe’s office is located at the USDA Service Center in Waite Park, MN. Orr works with private landowners to improve wildlife habitat and water quality by promoting the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and related USDA Farm Bill Programs. Sellnow summarizes, “If you are interested in protecting, restoring, and enhancing wildlife habitat in Stearns County, we hope to see you at our Pheasants Forever annual Banquet.” You can get your 2015 Stearns County Pheasant Forever banquet ticket at www.stearnsfpf.org.

Message from the President

December 18, 2014

PHEASANT SUMMIT MISS-FIRES

The Pheasant Summit last Saturday the 13th in Marshall called for by Governor Dayton and attended by over 300 participants, mostly hunters, came to the wrong conclusion. According to the Press and Tribune, the number 1 recommendation was “increased enforcement” of State Law would increase Habitat & Pheasant hunting in Minnesota. I say WRONG!

Media reports indicate the conversations were dominated by an interest in enforcing regulations that require “buffers” along natural drainways and judicial drainage systems. Small discussion groups were facilitated by some 50 DNR staffers in attendance according to one newspaper; the #1 result (recommendation voted on) was “more enforcement of current regulations”; I say “Miss-Fire”.

The Commissioner of DNR stated he supported the idea of more enforcement; the Governor seemed open to increased enforcement, stated the newspaper. One voice of reason and common sense in the articles came from Agricultural Commissioner Dave Frederickson. He is opposed to State enforcement of regulations left by law to local jurisdictions to enforce. “If local agencies are unable to enforce the laws, the laws might have to be scrapped”, he is quoted by one paper. I say if the laws aren’t working let’s

fix them...so they work. If local jurisdictions aren’t enforcing State law then there is a reason; loss of revenue. Buffers are idle lands when it comes to commodity production. Yes, there are many environmental and wildlife benefits with buffers. The question is who pays for it? One recommendation I have is to modify the existing buffer law and provide a “\$0 property tax” incentive for every acre of buffer established by landowners. The Revenue issue is then shared by all taxpayers in the State. The result, I would say “more buffers” in place.

The Summit did result in several subsequent recommendations I think are positive such as an increase in State bonding \$\$’s for acquisition of Habitat and targeting funding to higher quality areas. Most in attendance @ the summit agreed that the best way to increase bird numbers and hunting opportunities is more and better Habitat. We need to work together with all Stakeholders to achieve our number one objective; Habitat.

Look forward to seeing chapter members at our annual Banquet on March 7, 2015. Come and enjoy the festivities and share your thoughts; “speak up”.



Steve Sellnow,
President, Stearns
County PF

Member Photos



SCPF member Nate Hylla with his 2014 South Dakota White-tail.



Jeremy and Erica Scegura each downed a big South Dakota White-tail this Bow season.

Advertisements

Your Advertisement here

Contact
Joe Orr at
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(320) 251-7800 Ext. 3

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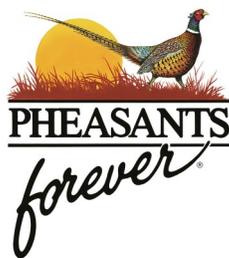
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Stearns County Chapter of
Pheasants Forever



**Renew Your
Membership
Today!**

Birds and the Bees

Let's talk about the birds and the bees. Central Minnesota is a popular place for bees and bee keepers. Drive a few miles of nearly any gravel road and you are likely to find a hive. On that same drive you may also see a bobolink, meadowlark, sedge wren or a pheasant.

These birds and bees, like many of us, call Central Minnesota home. The bees are hungry and in trouble. With increased herbicide use, and more and more acres being converted to crop production, there are not enough blooming flowers on the landscape to support them. Many of our birds are also dependent upon a flowering ecosystem to provide them with insects, seeds, cover and nesting habitat.

By restoring flowering grassland habitat back to the landscape we can get more than two birds and some bees with one stone. If we apply this habitat to the correct place, such as bordering a water body, or on highly erodible acres we can achieve even greater conservation benefits.

Through USDA's EQIP Honey Bee Program eligible land owners can receive technical and possibly financial assistance to provide habitat for both the birds and the bees. If you would like to protect water and soil quality and provide habitat for pollinators and other wildlife, contact the Stearns County USDA/SWCD office at (320) 251-7800, or stop into the office, we are located at 110 2nd Street South Suite 128. Waite Park, MN 56387.

By: Sabin Adams sadams@pheasantsforever.org

PF hires Matt Christensen as Western Minnesota Regional Representative

St. Paul, Minn. - November 18 -

Pheasants Forever has named Matt Christensen as the organization's Western Minnesota Regional Representative. Previously, Christensen served as a Pheasants Forever habitat specialist. In his new position, Christensen will support and promote the conservation work of Pheasants Forever chapters in southwest, west-central and northwest Minnesota.

"Christensen has been a strong addition to the Pheasants Forever team and we are excited about the direction he will take the organization in this new role," stated Tom Fuller, Pheasants Forever's north region director. "His passion and commitment to our mission is highlighted by his volunteerism with multiple chapters and the work he has accomplished thus far for Pheasants Forever."

Originally from Elk River, Minn., Christensen has been employed with Pheasants Forever since 2007, having served as a habitat specialist working in the prairie region of the state. In addition to this role, he volunteers his time as an active committee member for both the Stevens County and Glacial Ridge Chapters of Pheasants Forever near his current residence of Kensington, Minn.

"I am excited to be starting in my new role as regional representative and supporting the great chapters we have in the state of Minnesota," explained Christensen. "With the upcoming Pheasant Summit being hosted in December as well

as the numerous habitat programs available in the state, I look forward to working with chapters to make habitat conservation a continued priority for Minnesota."

Christensen earned a B.S. in Wildlife Management in 2005 from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. Prior to joining Pheasants Forever in 2007, Christensen was a research technician for the Colorado Division of Wildlife, responsible for monitoring the movements of sage grouse in western Colorado and maintaining landowner relationships in the area. Supporting him during this transition is his wife, Erin, and their two children, Jake and Avery. Christensen officially started as the Western Minnesota Regional Representative on November 18, 2014.



By: Jared Wiklund JWiklund@pheasantsforever.org