

## PA Chapter and Local Chapters of the NWTF 2007-2008 Accomplishments

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact: Bob Kasun, Pa. Chapter of NWTF public relations, 814-942-3990.

PANWTF: A commitment to conservation of wild turkey and preserving hunting heritage.

- An additional \$292,000 of Hunting Heritage Super Fund spent on conservation and hunting.
- Since 1985, Pennsylvania NWTF has supported wild turkey with \$4.6 million.

For more than three decades, the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation has stood strongly behind its mission statement, "Dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and preservation of our hunting heritage."

It's a role the PANWTF takes very seriously, evident by great number of accomplishments over the years.

The latest success story for the PANWTF is the announcement of \$292,000 of Hunting Heritage Super Fund spent on projects and events for the 2008 calendar year.

Since 1985, \$4.6 million has been raised and spent on state super fund projects and events.

"Pennsylvania Chapter NWTF accomplishments tell the story for our support of the NWTF mission statement, wild turkey conservation and hunting heritage," said Don Heckman, Pennsylvania Chapter NWTF Vice President. "Our 33 years of accomplishments as outlined by NWTF programs while partnering with PGC, DCNR, Allegheny National Forest, Corps of Engineer, conservation and sportsmen's groups, and agencies provide the catalyst for continued wild turkey management plan criteria, habitat and land management improvements, and our NWTF outreach programs."

The PANWTF's outreach to wild turkey hunting is far reaching. The state organization commitment includes wild turkey management, hunting safety and education, strategic planning, outreach programs along with financial support and communications.

And all of the organization's success wouldn't be possible without the partnership of 88 local chapters and 20,000 plus PANWTF members.

"Our local chapters and volunteers do the job when it comes to habitat work, helping out with turkey management, running NWTF Outreach Programs, and helping out with our fund raising banquets and projects," Heckman said. "They also work hard to help spend Hunting Heritage Super Fund dollars for the betterment of the wild turkey, NWTF and PANWTF sponsored projects, their local chapters events, while promoting turkey hunting

## PA Chapter and Local Chapters of the NWTF 2007-2008 Accomplishments

safety and hunting ethics."

The grassroots efforts of the state chapter has been applauded on several regional and national fronts.

According to Bob Eriksen, NWTF Regional Biologist for Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware, the PANWTF is a national leader for conservation and preserving hunting heritage.

"Not only is the Pennsylvania Chapter one of the oldest state chapters in the nation, it is among the most active," Eriksen said. "The chapter consistently is at the head of the pack nationally in terms of putting dollars into the Hunting Heritage Super Fund. Those dollars are put to work on the ground in every state, but here in Pennsylvania, our volunteers have focused on using the bulk of the dollars generated for wildlife habitat enhancement projects."

The bottom line is the members of PANWTF are making a difference for the wild turkey.

"Each year the chapter spends more than \$100,000 on habitat work affecting literally thousands of acres and a host of wildlife species," Eriksen said. "But the strength of the chapter is in our system of 88 local chapters representing a diversity of interests ranging from outreach to youth hunter, women and the disabled to community service projects.

"Our local chapter members across the state roll up their sleeves annually and actively participate in wild turkey research and habitat improvement. It is our close relationship with the Pennsylvania Game Commission that allows our chapters to be so deeply involved in working for the wild turkey."

The following is a look at some of the PANWTF accomplishments in 2007, provided by Don Heckman.

### Wild Turkey Management:

- Annually meet with Pennsylvania Game Commission Executive Staff to review and update PGC "Management Plan for Wild Turkeys in Pennsylvania - 2006-2015" 6 Objectives and 47 Strategies.
- Ongoing annual financial and man time support for state and federal wildlife agencies for wild turkey habitat improvement projects across Pennsylvania -- 64 projects funded for \$107,000; over 27 years \$2.3 million has been spent on habitat improvement improving over 273,000 acres.
- Continued support for PGC Wild Turkey Biologist on 4 year state-wide gobbler leg banding research project, winter 2008 - 3rd year - \$10,000 spent on PGC

## PA Chapter and Local Chapters of the NWTF 2007-2008 Accomplishments

research project; \$34,800 spent thus far for 4 year project.

- Local chapter volunteers are working with PGC staff to trap, band and release wild turkeys for this research project.
- Continued support for PGC Wild Turkey Biologist on TMA 7B [WMU 5A] Wild Turkey Task Force Recommendations for summer sightings and wild turkey habitat improvements on Michaux State Forest.
- Supporting NWTF and Northeast Agency Wild Turkey Biologists with \$15,000 invested in the Wild Turkey Population Model data project.

### Hunting Safety and Education:

- Promote turkey hunting safety by distributing 2000 Identify Your Target posters through our PGC - Pennsylvania Chapter NWTF information education program.
- Pennsylvania Edition - NWTF Turkey Hunting Success and Safety Brochure completed, available on the Pennsylvania Chapter web site <http://www.panwtf.org>, distributed to local chapters to be used to inform and educate turkey hunters.
- Turkey hunting safety articles and news releases published for spring and fall turkey hunting seasons, publications include "Turkey Talk", "PA Outdoor Times", PGC 2008-2009 Hunting and Trapping Digest, PFSC "On Target".
- Worked with PGC Commissioners and Executive Staff to remove hunting regulation for mandatory orange while moving during 2008 spring gobbler season.
- Maintain two DART interactive instruction systems for teaching and instructing youth about turkey hunting safety and safe shooting practices.

### Turkey Hunting:

- Added spring gobbler season to Mentored Youth Hunting regulation; working to get fall turkey hunting season added for Mentored Youth Hunting regulation.
- In recent years have worked with PGC Commissioner's and Executive Staff to recommend and regulate a youth spring gobbler season, adding a regulation for using dogs for turkey hunting during fall hunting season, adding additional days - hunting opportunities - for spring gobbler season, and supporting fall season lengths as regulated through wild turkey management plan wildlife principles.

## PA Chapter and Local Chapters of the NWTF 2007-2008 Accomplishments

- Working on extending adult spring gobbler season to May 31, all day youth and adult spring gobbler season hunting, expanding youth spring gobbler hunting to more than one day, and supporting legislation to lawfully regulate Sunday Hunting with other state-wide conservation and sportsmen's organizations.

### NWTF Pennsylvania Wild Turkey Management Strategic Plan:

- Completed NWTF Strategic Management Plan for Pennsylvania. First NWTF strategic management plan to be announced.

### NWTF Outreach Programs and Financial Support:

- Held 88 Hunting Heritage Super Fund Banquets throughout Pennsylvania with local chapters.
- Held 34 JAKES [Juniors Acquiring Knowledge Ethics and Sportsmanship] events throughout Pennsylvania with local chapters.
- Held 24 WITO [Women In The Outdoors] events throughout Pennsylvania with local chapters.
- Held 5 Wheelin' Sportsmen's events throughout Pennsylvania with local chapters.
- Help 1 Land Owner Field Day in Pennsylvania with local chapters.
- Sponsored 27 scholarships to high school seniors throughout Pennsylvania with local chapter support.
- Provided 88 NWTF Education boxes to schools throughout Pennsylvania with local chapters.

### Financial Support:

- \$10,000 contribution to support land acquisition project team for 2,500 acre Glatfelter Tree Farm Number One land purchase for additional state forest property for DCNR - Bureau of Forestry - Michaux State Forest.
- On-going funding and distribution program for NWTF Conservation Seed and Seed Subsidy programs.

### Communications:

## PA Chapter and Local Chapters of the NWTF 2007-2008 Accomplishments

- State Chapter participates on Governor's Sportsmen's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation.
- State Chapter participates on Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs Board of Directors and attends their semi-annual Federation Conventions.
- State Chapter participates on PA Coalition of Sportsmen with other state-wide conservation and sportsmen's organizations on legislative and wildlife and land management projects and issues.
- State Chapter participates on Habitat Alliance with other vested interest conservation and sportsmen's organizations reviewing habitat management, wildlife management, and environmental projects and issues.

### State General Assembly:

- Active in supporting state legislation protecting our conservation, wildlife management, hunting, trapping, and pro gun rights, meeting with state legislators, providing written and spoken communications to legislator's, legislative committees, and state agencies. Continued active participation for providing information education to these leaders.
- Active in not supporting state legislation that would take away or negatively impact our conservation, hunting and trapping, and firearms ownership privileges and lawful rights through written and spoken with legislator's, legislative committees, and state agencies. Continue being an active participant and providing information education to these legislative and state agency leaders.

### NWTF:

- L.A. Dixon Award for Hunting Heritage Super Fund Banquets highest total net dollars raised in a state - \$489,706 during 2007 presented at NWTF 2008 Convention.

### Want to learn more?

- Pennsylvania Chapter of NWTF Web site: [www.panwtf.org](http://www.panwtf.org).
- National Wild Turkey Federation Web site: [www.nwtf.org](http://www.nwtf.org).