

Wild Turkey Management Committee Report – January 11, 2009 PA Chapter NWTF Board Meeting

Wild Turkey Management changes require PGC Staff and Commissioner overview.

- 1) Support revised PGC Management Plan For Wild Turkeys In Pennsylvania, 2006-2015, operational with 47 strategies documented, measuring strategies as outlined, and the plan fully funded for 10 years;
- 2) Northeast Wild Turkey Population Model – implement in wild turkey management plan – PA NWTF has \$15,000 invested in development; model data and modeling results are requirements for future wild turkey management decisions;
- 3) Recommendation to extend last day of spring gobbler season to May 31, permanently --- Commissioner's approved Memorial Day, Monday, May 26, 2008 as last day of 2008 spring gobbler season under final rule making on April 18, 2007 Commissioner meeting; Commissioner's approved Memorial Day, Monday, May 25, 2009 as last day of 2009 spring gobbler season; recommend Commissioner's approve Memorial Day, Monday, May 31, 2010, and keep May 31 as last day for future spring gobbler seasons. **Commissioner's voted okay to end 2010 spring gobbler season on May, 31, 2010. No Commissioner public comment was made to make mandatory regulation for spring gobbler season on May 31 permanently. PANWTF will have to include in next January public comments, along with PGC BWM.**
- 4) Recommendation for Mentored Youth Hunting to including fall turkey hunting season in regulation starting in 2009; **We need to support HB 281 to allow "tag sharing" with Mentored Youth Hunters and then work with PGC to get them to support including fall turkeys**
- 5) Recommendation to expanding youth spring gobbler season and regular spring gobbler season to all day hunting starting 2011, after 4 year gobbler leg band research project is completed in 2009 and project evaluation is completed by 2010; could be moved out to 2013 if all day spring gobbler season is adopted in 2010.
- 6) Recommendation to expand youth spring gobbler to more than one day;
- 7) Continue recommendations to reduce **or increase** WMU fall season lengths as management plan setting fall season guidelines are determined; using management data based on current field data and indices, harvest densities, population densities, and hunter densities, as charted measurements outlined in the wild turkey management plan; when management data supports regulation change; **Mr Schleiden successfully got WMU 2F moved from 2 weeks back to 3 weeks one year ahead of schedule, at earliest should have been fall 2010 if the criteria was met; just like he successfully did on WMU 4D 2 weeks to 3 weeks one year ahead of schedule, and just like he did when we recommended and BWM recommended to cut 2G to 2 weeks. And he had 2 more in his district or surround district back in the early part of 2000's.**
- 8) State-wide gobbler leg band research – first year 2006, second year 2007, third year 2008 completed, fourth year for project Winter 2009 underway; first three years of research project funding support from NWTF and PANWTF is \$145,870 from NWTF Grant In Aid and PA Chapter NWTF Hunting Heritage Super Fund for research project equipment and trapping materials; PGC funded administrative, staff and transportation requirements, other agency project expenses; **The Game Commission is doing well with the final year of banding. I don't have all the figures, but the NC Region banded 50, NE Region has 48 so far, SE Region banded 65, SC is in the 40's and the SW and NW are in the 30's. I think the total stands at 288 as of February 27th.**
- 9) Four year state-wide gobbler leg band study **is ongoing with banding completed in March 2009 with the data gathering and analysis will likely take until December of 2009;**

10) Submit next wild turkey research proposal in 2008/2009 and request funding for state-wide hen telemetry study for 4 years – 2010-2013. **The request for NWTF Grant-in-Aid Research Project funding had mixed reviews. The technical committee thought the study was well-planned, but extremely expensive. This was primarily because the satellite transmitters are so pricey. The tech committee did not turn thumbs down on the project but suggested that modifications be made to the design or that additional funding be sought from other sources (the agency and PANWTF). If the initial year funding request (\$139,000) is reduced the project will be more likely to get support. The three other years will run between \$35 and 39K.**

Legislation changes require Governor signature.

1) PGC hunting license increase legislation – supporting need for PGC additional revenue, and supporting alternative funding option recommendations. Turkey Hunting License – continue with our position statement, articles and news release supporting need for combined spring and fall turkey hunting license, support fully funded wild turkey management plan to complete yearly objectives and strategies;

2) Support Sunday hunting as regulated by PGC, required legislation to change Title 34 Game Code;

3) Do not support legislation [Title 34 Game Code] through legislative wording that changes PGC seasons and bag limits; seasons and bag limits are PGC Regulation [Title 58 Regulation Code].

Other Committee actions requiring PA Chapter NWTF Board participation and overview.

PANWTF Turkey Hunter Cooperative Program [[Turkey Talk 2009 issue](#)]

Other Committee actions requiring PGC Staff and Commissioner participation and overview.

1) Turkey hunter safety and ethics – Comprehensive PGC wild turkey hunter safety - NWTF Turkey Hunter Safety DVD provided to PGC HTE classes and availability to general hunting public; helping PGC reach out to 300,000+ turkey hunters with additional turkey hunter safety and ethics information and material; PA Edition NWTF Turkey Hunting Success and Safety brochure; NWTF Turkey Hunter Safety Task Force material;

2) Annually review of meeting minutes from PGC Executive Staff and PA NWTF June meeting as provided by PGC Wild Turkey Biologist Mary Jo Casalena; 2008 meeting minutes have been forwarded for final review and update; copy of meeting minutes for PA NWTF Board of Directors and NWTF Staff are available; important wild turkey management criteria and decision making foundations have been accomplished since these joint partnership yearly meetings started back in the mid 1980's.

Requested PGC wild turkey biologist to update PA Chapter NWTF Board at the January and June board meetings on status of Objectives and Strategies as outlined in the PGC Management Plan For Wild Turkeys In Pennsylvania.

3) NWTF wild turkey management outreach programs - Wild Turkey Woodlands, fund HHSF Habitat, Safety Education, Land Acquisition, Habitat programs, Conservation seed programs, Project HELP, Operation Appleseed, Operation Oak, Get In The Game - Hunting Heritage Club, other budgeted NWTF outreach programs and HHSF Super Fund expenditures, support funding for NWTF's Pennsylvania Comprehensive Wild Turkey Management Plan, continue with PANWTF articles and news releases to Tell The Story.

NWTF North American Wild Turkey Management Plan.

1) Pennsylvania Comprehensive Wild Turkey Management Plan - support management plan objectives and recommendations, provide for fully funded management plan criteria as directed by NWTF Wild Turkey Biologist and NWTF Conservation Programs.