

**PA Chapter NWTF Wild Turkey Management Committee Report
October 3, 2010 PANWTF March Board Meeting
Submitted by Don Heckman, WTM Committee**

Wild Turkey Management changes requiring PGC Staff and Commissioner overview.

- 1) Support PGC Management Plan For Wild Turkeys In Pennsylvania, 2006-2015, goal, 8 objectives 47 strategies, with measurement timeline outlined, plans needs to be fully funded over the 10 years; **management plan objectives and strategies are not being fully funded.**
- 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; **no current update on data or model implementation.**
- 3) Recommendation to extend last day of spring gobbler season to May 31, permanently --- **FINAL COMMISSIONER APPROVAL – BOC Meeting April 20, 2010.**
- 4) Recommendation for Mentored Youth Hunting to including fall turkey hunting season in regulation starting in 2011. HB 281 Mentored Youth Fall Hunting passed House; **Passed Senate Game and Fisheries and Appropriations Committees. Full Senate floor vote expected.**
PANWTF needs to support HB 281 to allow “tag sharing” with Mentored Youth Hunters and then work with PGC to get their support to including fall turkey hunting with fall deer[doe] hunting. PGC hang up is tag sharing.
- 5) Recommendation to expand youth spring gobbler season and regular spring gobbler season to all day hunting after 4 year gobbler leg band research project is completed in 2009, project evaluation will be completed in 2010, and recommendations will be documented. **At April 20, 2010 PGC Commissioner meeting they voted 8-0 to expand spring gobbler season for last two weeks of spring season to all day hunting starting Spring 2011.**
- 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. **Major negative fall turkey hunting regulations for season start and end date changes were adopted by PGC BOC at April 20 Meeting. PANWTF articles have been distributed documenting our disapproval and request for changes to 2011 Fall Turkey Hunting Season Regulations.**
- 8) State-wide gobbler leg band research – 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 4 year study is completed. NWTF and PANWTF research project financial support was **\$150,416** from NWTF Grant In Aid and PA Chapter NWTF Hunting Heritage Super Fund for research project equipment and trapping materials. Mary Jo has updated Board in her Tech Committee Reports on all aspects of research project to-date. Four year state-wide gobbler leg band study final analysis has been completed; final results and hunting public announcements will be completed soon. **Penn State released an article. PGC research study results have been released, August 9, 2010.**
- 9) PGC submitted Fall Hen Harvest Rates Study to NWTF Technical Committee requesting funding for state-wide hen research/telemetry study for 4 years – 2010-2013. Bob Boyd resubmitted and presented NWTF Grant-In-Aid proposal for 2011-2013. NWTF Tech Committee is reviewing proposal. Mary Jo presented Hen Harvest Rate Study Executive Summary at January 2010 Board meeting and update at March 7, 2010 Board meeting. PANWTF continues evaluation for state chapter project funding for remaining 3 years. **With major changes adopted for 2010 fall turkey hunting season dates Hen Harvest Rate Study will continue as scheduled with changes to Objectives. PGC and NWTF Wild Turkey Biologists are reviewing research study and will update PANWTF Board.**
- 10) PA Chapter NWTF has submitted position statement on 2010 Fall Turkey Hunting Season date changes to PGC Commissioners and Executive Staff. PA Chapter NWTF has also submitted position statement for news release across Pennsylvania, and submitted articles in Turkey Talk. **NWTF Dr. James Earl Kenamer submitted support letter to PGC, Aug, 11, 2010.**
- 11) Wild Turkey Biologists Spring Options white paper has been finalized for PGC Executive Staff and Commissioner’s review. **PANWTF is reviewing white paper for future strategies and recommendations to see where PANWTF will support PGC and turkey biologists on their recommendations.**
- 12) June 10, 2010, PGC Staff meeting with PA Chapter NWTF representatives in Harrisburg Headquarters building was held. Meeting agenda and minutes will be forth coming.

Legislation changes require Governor signature.

- 1) PGC hunting license increase legislation – SB 740 in Senate Game and Fisheries Committee. PANWTF continues years of support for PGC additional hunting license revenue, and supporting alternative funding option recommendations. Turkey Hunting License – continue with our position statement, articles and news release supporting need for spring turkey hunting license, support fully funded wild turkey management

plan to complete yearly objectives and strategies. **No Senate movement on hunting license increase or alternative funding legislation.**

2) Support Sunday hunting as regulated by PGC, required legislation to change Title 34 Game Code. No House movement on Sunday hunting legislation HB 779.

3) Do not support legislation [Title 34 Game Code] through legislative wording that changes PGC hunting seasons, bag limits, and shooting hours. PGC hunting seasons, bag limits, and shooting hours are changed by Board of Commissioners through PGC Regulation [Title 58 Code].

4) PANWTF Legislative Committee Report details legislative bills working through the process or have been signed by the Governor.

5) Two important legislative bills have been signed by Governor Rendell, HB 1859 – increased fines and penalties for illegally taking of wildlife; HB 1890 – Rockview Property in Spring Creek Canyon has been completed with sub dividing 1829 acres.

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

1) PANWTF Spring Turkey Hunter Cooperative Program for Spring 2010 has been completed. Jim will review program at July Board meeting.

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. Final June 2010 meeting minutes will be forwarded to PGC Staff and PANWTF Board. Important wild turkey management criteria and decision making changes have been accomplished since these joint partnership yearly meetings started back in the mid 1980's. Continue request for PGC wild turkey biologist to update PA Chapter 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, Habitat Management, Safety Education, Land Acquisition, Conservation Seed programs, Project HELP, Operation Appleseed, Operation Oak, other budgeted NWTF outreach programs and HHSF Super Fund expenditures, support funding for NWTF's Pennsylvania Comprehensive Wild Turkey Management Plan, continue distributing PANWTF news releases and articles in Turkey Talk, Tell The Story – Pass It On.

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.