

**PA Chapter NWTf Wild Turkey Management Committee Report
March 6, 2011 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; **several management plan strategies are not being fully funded or followed.**
- 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; **Mary Jo updating model for 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. **SB 274 pass by Senate G&F Committee, no mention of fall turkey.** PANWTF needs to continue to support “tag sharing” with Mentored Youth Hunters and then work with PGC to get their support to including fall turkey hunting with fall antlerless hunting legislation.
- 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 up to May 31 to all day hunting starting Spring 2011. Will need to wait 3 years before continued support for all day youth hunt opportunities, unless.**
- 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. **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 of these fall turkey hunting season regulations. Feb. 1, 2011 under Proposed Rule making, Commissioner’s move tentative fall turkey hunting season dates back to 2009/BWM supported/recommended dates, except for 4th Saturday, which is now Bear Season Start date; and kept Thanksgiving Day, Friday, and Saturday intact.**
- 8) PGC Gobbler Leg Band Research Study (2006-2009) has been completed. Study results have been documented by Dr. Duane Diefenbach and Mary Jo Casalena, and handed out to PA Chapter NWTf Board. **What will be the PGC recommendations coming out of this research study and how will they be presented to PGC Executive Staff, Commissioner’s, PA Chapter NWTf?**
- 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 approved funding for 2011 trapping sessions. Mary Jo, IAN, or John Dunn and Bob Eriksen can update Board on final decision and payment schedule.** Mary Jo presented Hen Harvest Rate Study Summary at January 31, 2011 Board of Commissioners meeting. **PGC BWM updates and recommendations will presented and reviewed at March 6, 2011 PANWTF Board meeting.**
- 10) PA Chapter NWTf 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. What will be the Board position statement and Commissioner Meeting comments for the 2011 Fall Season? **We now know under Proposed Rule making, Commissioner’s move tentative fall turkey hunting season dates back to 2009 format/BWM supported/recommended dates, except for 4th Saturday, which is now Bear Season Start date; and kept Thanksgiving Day, Friday, and Saturday intact.**
- 11) Wild Turkey Biologists Spring Options white paper has been finalized March 2010 for PGC Executive Staff and Commissioner’s review. **Number of changes have been made by Commissioner’s like expanding spring gobbler season to all day hunting for last 2 weeks up to May 31 for spring season starting in 2011 No further reports back from Commissioner’s or Executive Staff on other white paper suggestions or changes.**
- 12) June 10, 2010, PGC Staff meeting with PA Chapter NWTf representatives in Harrisburg Headquarters building was held. **Final meeting minutes were distributed on September 29, 2010. Time to review action items to see what is currently being done and what is still on the back burner before June 2011 meeting. Waiting for date to be finalized for June 2011.**

Legislation changes that require Governor signature.

1) **Spring Turkey Hunting License proposed by PA Chapter NWTF Board of Directors. Support statement and benefits talking points will be distributed to several key Legislator's, PGC Executive Staff, PGC Commissioner's, and Local Chapter Presidents.**

2) PGC hunting license increase legislation – no legislative action was taken on legislative bill introduced in 2009-2010 session. **Waiting decision to introduce a new PGC Hunting License Increase Package and those licenses, tags, stamps that will be included for 2011-2012 legislative session.**

3) Support Sunday hunting as regulated by PGC, required legislation to change Title 34 Game Code. No Legislative was taken on legislative bill in 2009-2010 legislative session. **Legislative bill will be introduced in 2011-2012 legislative session.**

4) 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].

**Other Committee actions requiring PA Chapter NWTF Board participation and overview.
PANWTF Spring Turkey Hunter Cooperative Program for Spring 2011 will be scheduled.**

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

1) Turkey hunting safety and ethics – New PGC Turkey Hunting Curriculum Course on schedule for Spring 2011 kick-off. Other PANWTF / PGC wild turkey hunter safety material - NWTF Turkey Hunter Safety DVD provided to PGC HTE classes; 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; New updated PANWTF Turkey Hunting Safety posters.

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 were 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.