



# PGC NEWS

P E N N S Y L V A N I A   G A M E   C O M M I S S I O N

2001 Elmerton Avenue • Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110-9797

For Information Contact:  
Bruce Whitman or Joe Kosack  
717-787-7015

Release # 14 -99  
May 3, 1999  
<http://www.pgc.state.pa.us>

## **WILD TURKEY MANAGEMENT PLAN SIGNED BY MADL TWO WILDLIFE CONSERVATION OFFICERS HONORED**

In one of his final official acts before retiring as executive director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Donald C. Madl signed and put into the record a "Management Plan for Wild Turkeys in Pennsylvania."

The signing took place April 29, with agency staff and representatives of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, looking on. <sup>DON HECKMAN</sup>  
DON O'BRIEN

"I'm proud to say that we now have wild turkey populations in nearly all suitable habitats throughout Pennsylvania," said Madl, who retired April 30, after 37 years of service with the Game Commission. "The recovery of the wild turkey from near extinction to present population levels is a success story attributable to modern wildlife conservation principles and scientific wildlife management."

The new wild turkey management plan, drafted by wildlife biologist William E. Drake and the Commission's Bureau of Wildlife Management, is designed to maintain and enhance wild turkey populations in all suitable habitats throughout Pennsylvania for hunting and viewing recreation by current and future generations.

Objectives of the plan include obtaining reliable estimates of wild turkey populations for each Turkey Management Area in the state by 2005; to maintain or exceed 1995 spring and fall statewide hunting success rates; to optimize life requirements in and minimize loss of suitable wild turkey habitat throughout the state; to improve public knowledge and appreciation of the wild turkey resource and its management; and to improve the safety, conduct and ethics of wild turkey hunters.

In addition, the plan seeks to improve hunter compliance with existing laws and regulations regarding wild turkey management; encourage legislation to prohibit game-farm turkey propagation, importation, exportation and the release of this stock into the wild; and to continue the proven practice of trap and transfer of wild tukeys while at the same time educating the public about the benefits of this program.

Wild turkey management in Pennsylvania has progressed through the stages of exploitation, protection and conservation habitat regeneration, natural range expansion; and finally trap and transfer range expansion.

"Information regarding wild turkey populations in Pennsylvania is very limited at present," said Drake. "Collection of reliable harvest rate data to estimate, or model our turkey population is critical. Reliable harvest rates are needed to assess the importance and effectiveness of present harvest management to our overall wild turkey management program."

Government agencies at federal, state and local levels share the Game Commission's interests in natural resources generally and the wild turkey specifically. These include the Bureaus of Forestry and State Parks within the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and federal managers of the Allegheny National Forest.

The largest conservation group with a primary stake in the wild turkey resource is the NWTF and on the state level, the Pennsylvania Chapter. Since 1987, the State Chapter has provided more than \$1,363,600 through 620 Super Fund Projects. These have included total cooperator expenditures of more than \$8 million in Pennsylvania for habitat enhancement, land acquisition, education and hunter safety programs.