

Becomin' a Shotgun Shootin Woman!

Each spring for the past fifteen years the 'Becoming an Outdoors Woman' Six Week Shotgun Clinic, sponsored by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, has introduced women to the sport of trap shooting, skeet and sporting clays. A handful from each of these classes continue to pursue their new sport and many of them go on to become proficient recreational shooters and some even become serious competitors.

Although the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources disbanded the Utah Chapter of 'Becoming an Outdoors Woman' at the end of 2006, the annual six week women's shotgun clinic will continue to introduce women to the shotgun sports thanks to the dedication of the volunteer instructors who originally brought the women's shotgun program to BOW and have decided to continue this important program on their own. This year's spring women's shotgun clinic will be at the Magna Gun Club beginning on Saturday, March 24 at 10:00 am and will run for six consecutive Saturdays.

"All of my friends who shoot trap learned how at this clinic. It's the only way to go," said one former participant, Deb Baum from Heber who is now a proficient recreational shooter. "In fact, a lot of the women I see at different events learned to shoot at this six week women's clinic."

"This clinic is for women who have never touched a shotgun before or women who have been shooting awhile but who would like to hone their abilities," says Louise Bradshaw, one of the instructors for the clinic. "The atmosphere is relaxed and friendly and you can get to know some other women and have fun while you learn something new."

Bradshaw, along with her father, Gene Ekenstam and her husband, Jon Bradshaw and friend Bob Libby have been teaching the six week shotgun clinic for the past fifteen years. They are also shotgun instructors for the National Wild Turkey Federation's 'Women in the Outdoors' program and they teach women's clinics at gun clubs around the State.

"I would go so far as to say that a good number of women shooters in the state of Utah were introduced to the sport through Gene and Louise and their crew," says Wendy Mair, of the Heber Valley Gun Club. "I love having them teach clinics at our club because I know the students are getting the absolute best instruction possible."

Because the class fills up quickly pre-registration is recommended. To get registered or to find out more information about this year's six week women's shotgun clinic, please contact Louise at 435-882-6328.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or INTERVIEW PLEASE CONTACT LOUISE BRADSHAW 435-882-6328 or l_ekenstam@hotmail.com.

Firearm-Related Fatalities at Record Lows; Accidents Among Youths Down Significantly

NEWTOWN, Conn.—A new report from the National Safety Council shows that accidental firearm-related fatalities remain at record lows, and accidents involving youths continue to decline significantly.

The downward trends are occurring even as firearm ownership rises in the U.S.

The declining trends reported by the National Safety Council are also supported by research available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). According to the CDC, in the past decade, all four regions of the U.S. have witnessed dramatic declines in the number of accidental firearm-related fatalities.

Statistics in the council's 2007 "Injury Facts" report show a 40 percent decrease in accidental firearm-related fatalities over a 10-year period ending in 2005. The report also shows firearm-related accidents involving children ages 14 and under declined 69 percent between 1995 and 2003.



The council's most recent statistics show 109,277 U.S. residents died in accidents of all types in 2005. Less than 1 percent involved firearms. The most common deadly accidents involved motor vehicles, poisonings and falls, claiming 75 percent of all accidental deaths.

"By continuing to heighten awareness of gun safety and responsible firearms storage, these record low numbers can be driven even lower," said Doug Painter, president of the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the trade association for the firearms industry.

NSSF directs and funds a number of initiatives focused on firearms safety, including Project ChildSafe®, which, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice, has distributed more than 35 million free gun safety information kits, including gun locks, nationwide NSSF also distributes safety literature and videos that emphasize outreach to schools. Additional support is provided for hunter safety programs.

"Programs and efforts that communicate the importance of firearms safety have undeniably played a part in bringing these numbers to record lows, and continuing that awareness will only help ensure they continue downward," Painter added.

The declining trends reported by the National Safety Council are also supported by research available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). According to the CDC, in the past decade, all four regions of the U.S. have witnessed dramatic declines in the number of accidental firearm-related fatalities.

Other new findings from the National Safety Council include:

There were 730 accidental firearm-related fatalities in 2005, down from 750 reported in 2004. Firearm-related fatalities are down 40 percent from the 1,225 accidents reported in 1995.

Accidental firearm-related fatalities among children ages 14 and under declined 7 percent in 2005 when compared to the previous year and were down 69 percent between 1995 and 2003.

Accidental firearm-related injuries were down 11 percent among teenagers (ages 15-19) when compared to the previous year.

Accidental firearm-related fatalities continue to have the largest percentage decrease of all measured types of accidental fatalities.

The estimated number of citizen-owned firearms in the U.S. has risen to more than 290 million, while the number of American households with at least one firearm is now about 47.8 million.

NSSF, formed in 1961, is the trade association for the firearm industry. It directs a variety of outreach programs to promote greater participation and better understanding of shooting sports, emphasizing safe and responsible ownership of firearms. For further information, visit <http://www.nssf.org>.

UTAH STATE PARKS RESERVOIR AND LAKE REPORT - FEBRUARY 27

Ice is melting at many lakes and reservoirs, please use extreme caution. Utah State Parks encourages all boaters to wear their life jackets.

Bear Lake State Park Marina: Frozen, ice 12"

Deer Creek State Park: Frozen

East Canyon State Park: Melting at shoreline, 10-12" in some places

Wide Hollow at Escalante State Park: Launch ramp open, 45 degrees

Great Salt Lake State Marina: Launch ramp open, 33 degrees

Gunlock State Park: Launch ramp open, 48 degrees

Huntington State Park: Frozen, ice 3-6"

Hyrum Lake State Park: Melted at shoreline, 36 degrees

Jordanelle State Park: Mostly frozen, melting
Millsite State Park: Frozen, ice 4-6"
Otter Creek State Park: Frozen
Palisade State Park: Frozen
Piute State Park: Frozen
Quail Creek State Park: Launch ramp open, 45 degrees
Red Fleet State Park: Frozen, ice 12+"
Rockport State Park: Melting at shoreline * access difficult, ice 8-12"
Sand Hollow State Park: Launch ramp open, 41 degrees
Scofield State Park: Frozen, ice 12+"
Starvation State Park: Frozen, ice 12+"
Steinaker State Park: Frozen, ice 12+"
Utah Lake State Park: Melting, some open water
Willard Bay State Park: Melting, some ice
Yuba State Park: Melting at shoreline, some ice
Strawberry: Frozen
Flaming Gorge: Mostly frozen

CALL FOR ENTRIES: Ogden Nature Center's 14th Annual Birdhouse Contest and Exhibit "For the Birds"

Nature lovers, designers, artists, craftspeople and others who give a hoot about birds are invited to enter their hand-crafted birdhouses in the Ogden Nature Center's 14th Annual Birdhouse

Competition and Exhibit. Entries will be received Monday, April 2 through Saturday, April 7 at the Nature Center's Visitor Center at 966 W. 12th Street in Ogden. Artists of all ages may enter up to two works and there is no entry fee.



Stoke your creativity and bring us your finest birdhouse - whimsical, beautiful, practical, functional, artistic or magical. Please be sure your birdhouse entry can last through the summer weather. The exhibit will be on display outdoors April 21 through September 1, 2007 so visitors to the Nature Center may enjoy the exhibit.

All birdhouses must be on a post and ready to ³plant² 2.5 feet in the ground. This year two-dimensional works will not be included in the competition. Entries must be original creations and will be judged by an interdisciplinary jury. Winners will receive awards at a reception and awards presentation on Wednesday, April 18 at

5:30 p.m.

For more information, please contact the Ogden Nature Center at 801-621-7595.

The exhibit's main sponsor is the Utah Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

FISHING REPORT FOR SOUTHEASTERN UTAH ABAJO MOUNTAINS No report.

HUNTINGTON CREEK Try a #12 beadhead Montana nymph, drifted along the bottom.

HUNTINGTON NORTH STATE PARK Work has begun on the dam gates and new spillway. Water levels will remain low until the work is completed in April. No report on fishing success.

HUNTINGTON RESERVOIR (also known as MAMMOTH RESERVOIR)

Fishing success has been sporadic, ranging from slow to fair. Try a chartreuse or white jig, tipped with a nightcrawler and salmon egg, fished 12 inches off the bottom. Bring a snow shovel and plan to auger at least 2.5 feet through the

ice. Tiger trout range from 12-17 inches. Closed to the possession of cutthroat trout.

JOES VALLEY RESERVOIR Fishing success ranges from slow to fair. The catch consists mostly of splake that generally fall under or within the slot limit. Tiger and cutthroat trout may also be caught. Small spoons or jigs tipped with chub meat are recommended. Special regulations apply. Please refer to the 2007 fishing guide.

LAKE POWELL Visit <http://www.wayneswords.com> for the fishing report, provided by Wayne Gustaveson, DWR project leader.

LASAL MOUNTAINS Kens Lake has thawed. Brown trout range from 12-15 inches. Mountain reservoirs remain frozen and inaccessible.

LOWER FISH CREEK Try a #12 San Juan Worm, #14 Prince Nymph, or #12 green scud in open water below the dam.

SCOFIELD RESERVOIR Fishing success has been mostly slow to fair. Try a chartreuse tube jig, tipped with a mealworm and salmon egg.

Bear River Dam Proposal set– Request from Trout Unlimited

I don't know if your aware of it or not but there is a current proposal to dam the Bear River in the canyon above Preston. This is bad news to hunters and fishermen in this area. Down in that canyon is good deer hunting and turkey hunting and this will be dissolved if the dam is built. There is also good fishing and floating through the canyon as it exists, and this area also contains Bonneville Cutthroat Trout whose habitat and range has already been greatly diminished. The FERC has scheduled the public scoping meetings and site visit for March 13th at 10:00 am (site visit) and the 14th at 7:00 pm (public meeting) in Preston. Official comments on the Preliminary Application Document (PAD) and first Scoping Document (SD1) are due to the FERC by April 14th. So...we at TU are trying to mobilize as many folks as possible to attend the public meeting on the 14th, and, if possible, the site visit on the 13th. If Twin Lakes is able to control the tone of these meetings there is no telling what impression the FERC will get. Any help with publicizing these meetings and/or mobilizing folks to attend would be greatly appreciated. I know that many Northern Utah folks regularly fish the 5 miles of beautiful canyon that will be wiped out, and TU has spent a lot of money and time in recent years working with partners to restore Bonneville cutthroat trout in the Bear River. This project would flood over 5 miles of the roughly 10 miles that currently support trout populations below Oneida Narrows Reservoir, and would wipe out the most popular and economically productive fishery in the 4 SE Idaho counties. Currently there are only 11 miles of public land in the 171 miles of Bear River in Idaho, and this project would flood 3 miles of public land (BLM) and an additional 3.7 miles of PacifiCorp land that is accessible to the public.

Could you spread the word about these meetings to all the UAC organizations and help in mobilizing the opposition to this proposal and spread the word to as many people as possible.

Thanks Chris Thomas

President
Utah Trout Unlimited

UTAH STATE PARKS SNOWMOBILE GROOMING REPORT - FEBRUARY 27

Due to recent and expected snow, reports change frequently. Please check snowut.com for updated information. Utah State Park Rangers encourage all snowmobile riders to use extreme caution and obtain an avalanche advisory before venturing into the backcountry by calling 1-800-OHV-RIDE. Be prepared with appropriate avalanche gear and training.

Hardware Ranch

Snow is falling. Conditions improve past Rock Creek and into higher elevations. Bear Lake groomed to Temple

Canyon and back on Sinks Trail, and reported new snow.

There is little accumulation from Hardware Ranch to Rock Creek. It has been impossible to get out of the Ranch to groom at high elevations * remain on standby pending snow.

Monte Cristo
No new report

Bear Lake / Logan Canyon
Much new snow and more coming.

Grooming completed:
February 23 * Amazon, Beaver Creek, Garden City (half-way), Sinks Trail, Swan Flat
February 21 * Franklin Basin
Tony Grove * No Grooming

Grooming schedule:
February 24 * Amazon, Beaver Creek
February 26 - Franklin Basin
February 25 * Sinks Trail, Swan Flat, Garden City (half-way)
Tony Grove * No grooming

Wasatch Mountain
No new report

Mirror Lake / Mill Hollow
Three to four feet of new snow and still snowing. Check website for grooming schedule.

Bear River Service to Whitney
Groomers dealing with drifts and new snow. Riding conditions are much improved, however, avalanche hazard has increased dramatically.

Uintah Basin
No new report

Scotfield/Joe's Valley/Skyline Drive
February 24 - North Skyline, 18-24" at trailhead Fairview top. The trail was last groomed
February 28 * North Skyline, Fish Creek Ridge with 18-24" of snow, Tucker / Starvation/Pondtown with 8-12" at trailheads and 16" on top. Pondtown has marked dangerous hazards about 3 miles up from the trailhead.
February 22 - Miller's Flat has 18-24", Joe's Valley has 10-12" of snow at the lower trailhead and 18-24" at top of Middle Mt.

Mt. Nebo
Grooming completed February 23 and new snow on the mountain, with at least a foot on top. Grooming completed from Payson side and up to the towers. Be careful around the bend in the road by the towers due to avalanche possibilities.

Ephraim/Manti/12-Mile
No new report

Fish Lake
No new report

Cedar Mountain/East Fork

February 27 - 8" of new snow

Grooming completed February 26 at Midway and Cedar Breaks. High winds and blizzard conditions possible.

Strawberry

No new report

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE WILL NOT CONDUCT IN-DEPTH REVIEW TO CONSIDER RECLASSIFYING UTAH PRAIRIE DOG

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has reviewed a petition to reclassify the Utah prairie dog from threatened to endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and concluded the petition does not contain substantial scientific data indicating reclassification is warranted.

The Service made this finding in response to a petition received in February 2003 from Forest Guardians, Center for Native Ecosystems, and others. In February 2006, the petitioners filed a complaint against the Service for failure to issue a timely finding on the petition. According to a settlement agreement, the Service agreed to make a petition finding by February 17, 2007.

The Utah prairie dog was listed as an endangered species in 1973. In 1979, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources petitioned the Service to remove the Utah prairie dog from protection under the ESA. The Service found that the petition provided substantial information regarding the status of the species and down-listed it from endangered to threatened in 1984.

The Utah prairie dog is currently found in three designated recovery areas in southwestern Utah: the Awapa Plateau; the Paunsaugunt region along the east fork and main stem of the Sevier River; and the West Desert region of eastern Iron county, with a few isolated colonies existing in mountain and desert valleys in eastern Iron and Beaver counties.

After a review of the information provided, the Service does not believe that present or threatened destruction or modification of habitat warrants reclassifying the Utah prairie dog from threatened to endangered. Utah prairie dog numbers continue to be stable and within the range of historic fluctuations. Many of the factors cited by the petitioners constitute small, localized impacts on specific Utah prairie dog colonies.



“Since the Utah prairie dog is currently listed as a threatened species, it is protected under the Endangered Species Act and benefits from conservation measures and recovery actions afforded by federal protection,” said Mitch King, the Service’s Acting Director of the Mountain-Prairie Region. “The Service will continue to monitor the population status, trends and management actions important to the conservation of the Utah prairie dog and we encourage interested parties to continue to gather data that will assist in these conservation efforts.”

The petition contends that continuing loss and degradation of habitat are threatening the continued existence of the species .

The Utah prairie dog is a rodent within the squirrel family and its species range is limited to the southwestern quarter of Utah. The species’ historic range extended across the desert almost to the Utah-Nevada state line. By the 1960s, distribution of the Utah prairie dog was greatly reduced due to disease, poisoning, drought, and human-related habitat alteration resulting from cultivation and poor grazing practices. By 1972, it was estimated that there were 3,300 Utah prairie dogs in 37 separate prairie dog colonies. Spring range-wide counts (which estimate approximately 50 percent of the adult population) are currently stable, ranging from 3,961 to 5,920 over the past 10 years.

The ESA provides for citizens to petition the Service to take listing actions, including adding species to the lists of threatened and endangered wildlife and plants as well as removing species from the lists. The Service is required to make a findings on whether the petition presents substantial information that the petitioned action may be warranted.

Today's finding is published in the Federal Register. For more information, please visit the Service's web site at: <http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/species/mammals/utprairiedog> .

Price Reduced on 2007 Official Utah Scenic Calendar

Salt Lake City ? If you don't already have Utah's award-winning 2007 Official Utah Scenic Calendar now is the time to get one. The Utah Office of Tourism has reduced the price of the calendar at Council Hall to \$5 apiece. The calendar went on sale last fall for a retail price of \$15.99. The 35th annual edition features recreational activities and events around the state. The calendar is used by the Governor's Office of Economic Development, which includes the Utah Office of Tourism and Utah Film Commission, at trade shows and other events to promote Utah's tourism destinations and recruit businesses to the state.

"We trying to get as many calendars as possible out in circulation early in the year so people will have a chance to



enjoy the stunning images of Utah's scenic wonders as long as they can," said Leigh von der Esch, managing director of the Utah Office of Tourism. "This is great way for our tourism partners to promote Utah to their out-of-state clients."

This year's calendar features 77 images compared to 35 photos in last year's edition. A photo of the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park is on the cover of this year's calendar. Other areas of the state included in the publication include: Mill Creek Canyon; Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons; Uinta Mountains; Mt. Olympus Wilderness; Logan Canyon; Glen Canyon National Recreation Area; and Arches, Capitol Reef and Zion National Parks. The calendar also contains a greeting from Utah Governor Jon M.

Huntsman, Jr.

The popular Utah Scenic Calendar continues to capture national and international honors for design and photography. In 2006, the calendar's graphic design, headed by Hardy, was awarded the Gold Award in the national category and the Silver Award in the world category of the Calendar Marketing Association's National Calendar Awards Competition. The Utah Scenic Calendar has won more than 30 National and World awards throughout the years.

The Utah Office of Tourism accepts wholesale or bulk orders of 25+ calendars. Individual orders of 24 or fewer may be purchased through the Zion Natural History Association (ZNHA) bookstore located at Council Hall, 300 N. State St., Salt Lake City, Utah, 84114. If you have questions, please call the tourism office at (801) 538-1900.

Lindon Open Bass Tournament

Saturday, May 12th 2007 Lindon Boat Harbor, Utah Lake

Costs: \$6.00 Gate Entrance Fee

\$50.00 Tournament Entry Fee

Big Fish: \$10.00

Boat Limit: 20 Boats

Type: Draw / Paper (Weight & Measurement)

Launch: Safe-light Weigh-in: 3:00pm

Meeting & Awards: 3:30pm

Contact me for further questions ... 801-577-9861

CALIFORNIA QUAIL MIGRATE TO COLORADO RIVER

PRICE, UTAH—On Thursday, February 22nd, the Division of Wildlife Resources participated in the migration of 24 California quail from Utah County to the Colorado River. Assistance came in the form of ground transportation.



Along the Wasatch Front, the quail population is at capacity and then some. Unhappy homeowners, tired of living on a chicken farm, have asked the DWR for help in finding the partridge-size birds a new home. As a result, two dozen birds were trapped, boxed and delivered to their new home the same day.

Trapping and relocation has been an effective means for reducing damage to homeowners, while providing for population expansion in suitable habitat elsewhere. Quail are fist-size fowl with a black head plume. They

prefer to run rather than fly. More quail transplants to southeastern Utah are expected to follow in the weeks ahead.

STATE PARKS, AVALANCHE CENTER ISSUE WEEKEND WARNING: STAY OUT OF AVALANCHE AREAS

Salt Lake City -- Due to recent and continued heavy snowfall, Utah State Parks and Recreation, Utah Avalanche Forecast Center and Utah Snowmobile Association are urging snowmobilers to stay out of avalanche areas, and stay on groomed trails and flat terrain this weekend.

"With the expected heavy snow falling on unstable layers, we are encouraging snowmobilers to call ahead for grooming and avalanche conditions, stay on the trail, and avoid high marking this weekend," said Ann Evans, Utah State Parks off-highway vehicle education coordinator. Evans reported three Utah snowmobilers died in avalanches last weekend.

Snowmobilers venturing out this weekend should follow these lifesaving tips:

Call 1-800-OHV-RIDE for avalanche conditions

Avoid highmarking

Avoid off-trail use

Carry a beacon, probe, shovel, and a first aid kit

Share your itinerary with someone not on your trip

Call (801) 231-2170 for avalanche training

Utah State Parks and Recreation is the snowmobile recreation authority for the state of Utah. The agency administers the summer and winter off-highway vehicle (OHV) programs including education, user compliance, trail grooming and maintenance, and search and rescue.

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever Going to the Dogs PF and QF Lifetime Memberships now Available to Dogs

Saint Paul, Minn. - February 22, 2007 - Pheasants Forever (PF) and its quail division, Quail Forever (QF), have

announced that lifetime memberships are now available for dogs. The first four dogs to become lifetime members did so at National Pheasant Fest in Des Moines, Iowa, this past January, including two PF and two QF lifetime member dogs.

"Dogs and hunting go hand in hand, but the relationship is even stronger than that," said Diane Weyandt, PF's Director of Membership, "In many respects, a dog is treated as an equal part of a family, just as a son or daughter, a brother or a sister. We felt it was time we open up our life membership program to recognize this fact."

The first dog ever to become a lifetime member was a yellow Labrador named Bridget, who now joins her owners, Jim and Patti Farrell of Portland, N.Y., as a PF life member. "She's always been a special dog, a wonderful hunter and a wonderful retriever," Jim said, "It's an honor to have Bridget become a dog life member, especially the first one." Jim said the new dog membership is an innovative way to support conservation. "I'm really impressed with the work Pheasants Forever has done and was eager to continue to donate to a great cause." Born on 9/11/01 with the registered name of Spirit of America, Bridget has already gained quite a bit of notoriety in the Midwest since Pheasant Fest. "I told Bridget I'm fine with her being famous, but no personal appearances during hunting season," Jim said.

Rooster Cogburn, a Vizsla owned by Elsa Gallagher, QF's Regional Wildlife Biologist in Missouri and Kansas, is the first QF life member dog. Gallagher wanted to give Rooster, who is named after the John Wayne movie of the same name, a lifetime membership because he is such an integral part of her hunting lifestyle. "Quail Forever is such a great organization and as someone who spends a majority of her time and money on quail hunting, I felt like I should give something back," Gallagher said, "A donation to Quail Forever seemed like the right thing to do. I trust this organization - Quail Forever is obviously committed to doing positive things for quail."

The second PF lifetime member dog is Millie, owned by PF Controller Alan Ferguson, who also is a PF lifetime member. The second QF lifetime member dog is Sam, owned by Carole Rowland of Pleasantville, Iowa. Rowland is also a life member of QF and PF.

For a donation of \$500, dogs become lifetime members and receive a Life Membership card, decal and pin, recognition in the PF or QF Annual Report and a Boyt Leather Dog Collar with name and phone number options. They also receive a premium choice of either a SportDog 1850 collar & beeper or a SportDog 1800 collar.

To find out more information on PF or QF dog lifetime memberships, or for information on becoming a lifetime member yourself, contact Lou Ann Hausladen at (651)209-4956 or via e-mail at lahausladen@pheasantsforever.org.

Citizens Needed To Serve on Wildlife Regional Advisory Councils

Nominations must be received by April 1

You can make a difference in how wildlife is managed in Utah.

Recent resignations have created several vacancies on the state's five wildlife Regional Advisory Councils (RACs).

RAC members represent one of six interest groups: sportsmen; agriculture; nonconsumptive wildlife (people who don't hunt or fish); locally-elected public officials; federal land agencies; and the public-at-large.

To fill one of the vacancies, you must live in the region of the state you wish to represent. If you do, then you must contact the proper conservation group or organization in your region and ask that they nominate you to fill the vacancy you'd like to fill. For example, if you want to fill a sportsmen vacancy, you must contact a Utah sportsmen group and ask them to nominate you for the vacancy.

To learn about wildlife or conservation groups in your area, please contact the nearest Division of Wildlife Resources office.

Nominating groups and organizations must submit their nominations by April 1.

Interview Process

RAC nomination forms can be downloaded from the DWR's Web site at <http://www.wildlife.utah.gov> . To obtain a form, click on "Board/RACs," and then click on "Regional Advisory Council nomination form" under the More Information category at the bottom of the page.

You may also obtain a nomination form at any DWR office.

After the groups and organizations have decided who they'd like to nominate, they must submit their nomination forms via e-mail or by mailing them directly to the Board/RAC coordinator in the DWR's Salt Lake City office.

The candidates who are nominated go through a standardized sifting and interview process before being ranked and submitted to Mike Styler, the executive director of the Department of Natural Resources. Styler, in consultation with DWR Director Jim Karpowitz, will make the final appointments from the top five candidates for each vacancy.

Serving on a RAC

Each of the RACs holds about 10 meetings a year to listen to DWR wildlife management proposals. They also take grassroots public input about the proposals. The RAC meetings usually last three to five hours. The meetings are held in the evenings, usually on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday night.

After taking the public input, the RACs vote on the DWR proposals. Then they report their findings and recommendations to the seven-member Utah Wildlife Board. The wildlife board makes the final decisions regarding the proposals.

RAC members are considered volunteers and are eligible to be reimbursed for the costs that result from their attendance at the meetings. Overnight travel is rarely required.

For more information, contact the nearest DWR office or Staci Coons, the DWR's Wildlife Board/RAC coordinator, at (801) 538-4718 or via e-mail at stacicoons@utah.gov .

See Hundreds of Tundra Swans

Ogden -- Hundreds of pure white tundra swans are migrating through northern Utah right now. You can both see and listen to them at the Seventh Annual Tundra Swan Day.

Tundra Swan Day - March 10

The Division of Wildlife Resources will host its annual Tundra Swan Day on March 10. Viewing will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area (WMA) west of Farmington and the Salt Creek WMA west of Corinne.

DWR biologists and volunteer naturalists will provide spotting scopes and parabolic dishes that you can use to both see and listen to the swans.

Admission is free.

Van Tours:

At the Farmington Bay WMA, naturalists will also conduct "behind the gates" van tours. These tours are for anyone who would like to visit parts of the WMA that are normally closed this time of the year.

The van tours are free.

Swan Activities:

The Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge will offer some special Swan Day activities at its Wildlife Education Center at 2155 W. Forest St. in Brigham City.

To reach the center, exit I-15 at Exit 363. After exiting the freeway, turn west and travel one block to the center.

At 10:30 a.m., artist Jean Hawrylo will teach kids how to draw a swan. The drawing class is limited to the first 15 kids, ages nine to 12. There is no cost to participate. You can register your child for the class by calling (435) 723-5887.

At 1 p.m., an activity for the whole family will be held as the center shows the movie "The Trumpet of the Swan." This full-length, animated movie runs for 75 minutes and is free of charge to view.



For more information about Tundra Swan Day, call the DWR's Northern Region office at (801) 476-2740 or the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge at (435) 723-5887.

Watching and Listening To Swans on Your Own

If you can't attend the March 10 event, great opportunities are available to watch and listen to swans on your own.

One of the best viewing opportunities is at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, where you can view swans from your car as you drive along the refuge's 12-mile auto tour loop.

Phil Douglass, DWR Northern Region conservation outreach manager, says he saw large numbers of swans feeding at the Ogden Bay WMA on Feb. 20. He also says that students touring the Farmington Bay WMA on Feb. 21 were thrilled to see and hear tundra swans at the WMA that day.

In addition to the Swan Day locations, he says the Ogden Bay WMA parking area at 5500 W. in Hooper (on the dead end just north of 4000 S.), and the parking area at 7500 W. in West Warren (about one mile south of SR-39 [also known as 12th Street]), are two great places to listen to the "swan song" this spring.

Douglass says the swan migration will peak within the next three weeks.

Whirling disease found in the Duchesne River

Biologists from the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) have discovered the parasite that causes Whirling Disease in fish taken from the Duchesne River. Samples collected recently from the confluence of the West and North Forks, and approximately three miles downstream of Tabiona, tested positive for the pathogen. In addition, Whirling Disease was confirmed in Rock Creek, a tributary to the Duchesne, several miles below the Stillwater Ponds.

This marks the first time Whirling Disease has been found in the Uinta Basin or Duchesne/Strawberry River drainage, and the fourth time in the Northeastern Region. The other hot spots are Carter Creek from Brownie Lake to Flaming Gorge Reservoir, Burnt Fork Creek east of Flaming Gorge, and Long Park Reservoir.

What happens now?

"Whirling Disease is caused by a small parasite that attacks the cartilage of a trout or salmon's head and spine," Schneidervin said. "If significantly infected, a fish can exhibit the whirling behavior (swimming in circles) and could die. Diseased fish have more problems swimming, are easier prey for predators, and become more susceptible to other diseases and environmental stress.

"In some Western waters, the disease has caused major impacts to wild rainbow and cutthroat trout fisheries. For example, some of the more productive reaches of the famous Madison River in Montana have had wild trout populations decline by up to 90 percent. In other streams, the parasite has had no apparent impact. It particularly affects young fish in naturally reproducing populations. Adult fish may become infected, but often don't exhibit signs of the disease." (Note: the Whirling Disease parasite does not infect humans.)

The discovery in the Duchesne River is of major concern to DWR biologists.

"Although the lower Duchesne is primarily a wild brown trout fishery, a species naturally more resistant to the disease, the upstream reaches of the river contain stocked rainbow and wild cutthroat trout," Schneidervin said. "Of particular concern is an invaluable population of pure strain Colorado River cutthroat trout located above the Central Utah Project (CUP) VAT Diversion on the West Fork. These fish are the source of the brood population in Sheep Creek Lake that provides eggs for intensive conservation efforts to prevent these native fish from being listed as Threatened or Endangered."

Schneidervin is also concerned about the location of the infection.

"Besides infecting this pure strain Colorado River cutthroat trout population and compromising one of the Region's premiere Blue Ribbon trout streams, if the pathogen gets above the CUP diversion system, it will rapidly spread to Carrant Creek, Strawberry Reservoir, Diamond Fork and the Spanish Fork River by the CUP transfer tunnels."

What can be done?

"The good news is that trout populations upstream on both the Duchesne River and Rock Creek were subsequently tested and found negative for the disease," Schneidervin said. "We're now working with the Uinta and Ashley National Forests to create a secondary fish barrier (like a dam or waterfall) below the VAT Diversion, place signs to alert and educate anglers, and initiate additional sampling to define the extent of the infection and identify hot spots regarding the potential spread of the pathogen above the CUP diversions."

"We also need help from anglers to prevent movement of the disease above the barriers or to additional waters," Schneidervin said. "The parasite has a complex life cycle. It starts as a spore (like a small microscopic egg) released from an infected fish. A small aquatic worm ingests the spore, where the parasite changes and is released as a free-swimming form. This "myxospore" enters a fish through the gills or skin and migrates through the nervous system, typically finding its way to the cartilage of the head or spine. Once in the fish, it starts producing spores. When the fish dies, the spores are released into the water where they can survive in the sediment for years before a worm ingests them and starts a new cycle."

"It's critical that anglers avoid harvesting fish in one area, then transporting their catch to another location to clean them," Schneidervin said. "Anglers who camp in one area and fish in another must be especially diligent. Because a single fish can contain thousands or even millions of spores, this mechanism [anglers moving fish and fish parts] may be responsible for many of the recent Whirling Disease introductions. Please clean fish well away from the water and dispose of all fish parts including entrails, heads, skeletons, etc. in the garbage. If that isn't possible, bury the parts deeply or burn them completely."



"Anglers and others who wade in the stream or get mud on boots, vehicle tires, or equipment can also move spores by carrying that mud to another site," Schneidervin said. "The best defense is to carefully clean all waders, boats, trailers, float tubes, etc. before reuse in another water. Anglers are also encouraged to use wading shoes that do *not* have felt soles, which are much more difficult to clean. Felt soles are also believed to be a major cause of the movement of New Zealand Mud Snails."

"Gear can be washed in a 10 percent solution of chlorine bleach, then dried thoroughly, preferably in the sun. Remember to drain and dry holding tanks and bilge pumps so fish and other uninvited guests, like Whirling Disease,

New Zealand Mud Snails or Zebra Mussels, don't get moved with the water from one place to another."

"There is no cure for Whirling Disease and once introduced into a watershed the disease cannot be eliminated," Schneidervin concluded. "We are highly concerned about the parasite infecting major fisheries and the lakes, rivers and tributary streams in the Uintas and other mountains. It could seriously reduce our native and wild populations of cutthroat and rainbow trout. For the angler it may mean lower catch rates for many others it's a serious blow to their quality of life. We need everyone's help to stop the spread of this disease and protect these invaluable Utah fisheries."

Safari Club International Will Defend Trapping in Maine

February 26, 2007

Safari Club International will be able to help defend against a lawsuit that challenges Maine's trapping program and threatens hunting everywhere. The lawsuit, recently filed in Federal District Court in Maine, challenges trapping in Canada lynx, bald eagle, and grey wolf range. The court has just approved SCI's request to participate as "amici curiae" (friend of the court). This will enable SCI to file legal briefs and present oral arguments. SCI will seek to convince the court that the state's trapping program does not illegally "take" (*i.e.*, hurt or kill) the three federally protected species, for example in traps or snares set for other animals. The Plaintiffs have brought this suit in the hopes of persuading the court to end or alter the trapping program in areas where the lynx or bald eagle exist (the grey wolf is not known to exist in Maine).

"We are happy to be involved in this case not only to defend the activities of sportsmen and women in Maine, but to guard against an adverse legal precedent that could be used to attack hunting and other sporting activities in other states," explained Ralph Cunningham, President of Safari Club International. A similar case is already pending in Minnesota and SCI is involved in that case as well.

"Amici curiae status gives us an opportunity to make pointed legal and factual arguments on behalf of the 53,000 members of SCI," said Kevin Anderson, Vice President of SCI and Chairman of the Legal Task Force.

SCI is the leader in protecting the freedom to hunt and in promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. SCI's 179 Chapters represent all 50 United States as well as 13 other countries. SCI's proactive leadership in a host of cooperative wildlife conservation, outdoor education and humanitarian programs, with the SCI Foundation and other conservation groups, research institutions and government agencies, empowers sportsmen to be contributing community members and participants in sound wildlife management and conservation. Visit <http://www.safariclub.org> or call 520-620-1220 for more information.

Priest Lake's Trapper Burn Is Open for Snowmobiling

SPOKANE - Despite the initial claims of environmentalist groups, the Trapper Burn north of Priest Lake, Idaho, will remain open to snowmobiling until April 1, following the most recent development in the ongoing litigation commenced by those groups over Idaho Panhandle National Forest's caribou management under the Endangered Species Act.

On February 14, 2007, following a three-day trial, U.S. District Judge Robert H. Whaley in Spokane, Washington, found that the Court's prior preliminary injunction should remain in place during the Idaho Panhandle National Forest's ongoing winter travel planning process. The Court concluded that there was no basis to shut down the portion of the Trapper Burn located on the Forest Service managed land or to close groomed routes, un-groomed routes, and popular off trail riding areas within the much larger Caribou Recovery Area. The only modification to the Court's prior preliminary injunction was the addition of a purported "travel corridor" along the watershed divide of the Selkirk Mountains through the Trapper Burn on the portion of the burn managed by the Forest Service. This addition was first announced at the end of the trial on February 14 and was based in large part on the relatively small number of caribou in the herd, centered around Canada's Stagleap Park on Highway 3 in British Columbia.

On February 22, 2007, the Court held a hearing to consider maps submitted by the Forest Service and environmentalist plaintiffs interpreting the scope of the Court's "travel corridor." At the close of the hearing, the Court declared the Forest Service map more accurately reflected the Court's prior direction and ordered the Forest Service to proceed with implementing the closure. The hearing was necessary to resolve disagreement between the Forest Service and the environmentalist plaintiffs, who contended a broad sweeping travel corridor effectively closing the Trapper Burn had been ordered. The Court's final decision was formally restated in findings of fact and conclusions of law issued on February 26, 2007, which likely conclude this case in the district court.

"The Court's confirmation of a narrow closure for the theoretical travel corridor comes as a relief," said Paul Turcke, the Boise attorney representing the Idaho State Snowmobile Association and other snowmobile enthusiasts in the proceedings. "The environmentalist's reactions to the ruling proclaiming that the entire Burn was to be closed were misplaced." Turcke concluded.

The latest ruling continues the closures from the Court's modified preliminary injunctions entered in November 2006 and adds only a 4 kilometer-wide corridor centered on the ridgeline through the Trapper Burn. The ridgeline is near the boundary between Forest Service, State of Idaho, and private lands and the Court made clear that non-federal lands, even within that corridor, would not be closed because the suit was filed only against the federal agencies and because the Court lacked jurisdiction over other landowners. Following the trial, the environmentalist plaintiffs submitted an interpretation of the corridor that would have extended much further than 4 kilometers to the north and east of the ridgeline, which would have effectively denied snowmobile access to the Trapper Burn. At the recent hearing, the Court rejected plaintiffs' interpretation of such a wide theoretical corridor.

The Court's final judgment comes during the ongoing winter recreation planning process in which the Forest Service will develop and implement a long-term plan for the Selkirk Mountains addressing caribou, snowmobiling, and other recreation and access issues. "The Court's final ruling in this case only intensifies our efforts in the long range planning process," said John Finney, a representative for Sandpoint area snowmobile riders. "We do not believe the Court has precluded a reasonable balance between caribou and snowmobile management. We look forward to continuing to work with the Forest Service on a plan based on sound science and reasoned management rather than the ill-conceived closure of a portion of the Selkirk Crest to snowmobiles for approximately the last 15 years. That closure has provided an on-the-ground study that shows that caribou do not prefer to reside south of the international border. Our short term challenge now is to continue our work with the Forest Service to inform riders of this latest closure and to try to minimize the compliance difficulties created by a closure boundary which will fall mid-slope in relatively featureless terrain," Finney concluded.

The testimony at trial by biologists involved since the unique population of caribou at issue were first listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act showed that these animals prefer the Canadian landscape, particularly around Stagleap Park, which is transected by Highway 3. The same animals that withstand the constant presence of vehicle traffic on this busy highway would seemingly tolerate the limited presence of snowmobiles without significant adverse consequences.

Under a prior temporary Forest Service restriction adopted by the Court, riding will cease on April 1st in the Trapper Burn. Outside the Trapper Burn, none of the other open snowmobile trails or riding areas were affected by any of the recent Court rulings.