

OHIO
STATE REPORT
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STEWARDSHIP

STEWARDSHIP ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2013

- Forged partnerships with Toledo Metro Parks and Ducks Unlimited to coordinate wetland habitat restoration, the National Wild Turkey Federation to initiate a statewide forest inventory, and Pheasants Forever to conduct grassland restoration on wildlife areas throughout the state.
- More than 4,000 federally endangered northern riffleshell and clubshell mussels were released into Big Darby Creek, marking the largest restoration of a federally listed species in Ohio. This project was coordinated in partnership with the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium, The Ohio State University, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.
- Developed Ohio's Asian Carp Tactical Plan to identify strategies for minimizing the risk of Asian carp introduction into the Lake Erie drainage basin and closed inland waters of the Ohio River drainage basin.
- Designated Bird Priority Areas to focus conservation efforts on four wildlife areas: Woodbury, Tri-Valley, Egypt Valley, and Crown City.
- Revised the Barn Owl Conservation Plan to include citizen science contributions and targeted communications efforts.

STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVES FOR 2014

- Implement strategies identified in Ohio's Asian Carp Tactical Plan to minimize the risk of Asian carp introduction into the Lake Erie drainage basin by closing direct water connections from the Mississippi River basin.
- Implement a new permitting structure and procedures to aid individuals to attain and report required permits.
- Develop and implement deer damage procedures to provide urban and suburban communities with tools to manage local deer populations.

- Initiate a study of trophy-sized flathead and blue catfish in the Ohio River to determine habitat use and movement between pools. Large fish will be implanted with transmitters and tagged beginning in the fall of 2014 and monitored for several years. Results will improve agency understandings of resource allocation and the effectiveness of regulations in the inter-jurisdictional fishery, which has become increasingly popular among Ohio anglers.

OPPORTUNITIES

OPPORTUNITIES ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2013

- Ohio's six state fish hatcheries stocked more than 45 million sport fish for public waters, including walleye, saugeye, steelhead, rainbow trout, brown trout, muskellunge, channel catfish, blue catfish, and hybrid striped bass. Stocking of fish provides opportunities for 1.3 million anglers statewide.
- Hosted the seventh annual Ohio National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) state tournament, which was attended by more than 1,400 students. The program continues to grow, and 370 Basic Archery Instructors were certified from 57 new schools to continue its expansion.
- Entered or renewed 19 fishing agreements to allow public fishing and fisheries management by the Division of Wildlife at reservoirs owned and operated by municipalities or private entities in 11 counties. New agreements at Marysville Reservoir (Union County) and Fremont Reservoir (Sandusky County) will result in the division stocking yellow perch with the hopes of creating fishing opportunities within three years.

OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVES FOR 2014

- Identify state-owned shooting ranges that require maintenance and/or upgrades, and proceed with improvements on areas previously identified, such as the Delaware Wildlife Area shooting range and Fallsville Wildlife Area archery range.
- Launch the Explore Bowhunting program during the National Archery in the Schools Program state tournament and use the opportunity to gather interest for pilot schools.
- Complete boat ramp access projects at Long Lake, the Scioto River at Mackey Ford and Kinnikinnick wildlife areas, Mohican Wildlife Area in Brinkhaven, Darr-Root on the Sandusky River, Old Lock and Dam 15 on the Ohio River, and Oberlin Reservoir.

CONNECTIONS

CONNECTIONS ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2013

- Project WILD, Aquatic WILD, and Growing Up WILD are now referenced in almost every grade level in the model curriculum for Ohio's Science Standards. This will greatly increase the Division of Wildlife's visibility to Ohio's formal educators and will likely lead to an increase in requests for materials and workshops in the 2014 school year, when these standards will be fully implemented.
- Ohio hosted the Federal Duck Stamp Contest for the first time in its history. Ohio native Adam Grimm won the competition that shined a national spotlight on Ohio, the Lake Erie region, and Maumee Bay State Park.
- Hosted two new angler summits, one for Lake Erie fisheries and the other for inland catfish fisheries. These meetings provided opportunities for information exchange between the division and avid anglers in informal settings. The Lake Erie summit focused on program overviews, walleye and yellow perch management, sport fishery trends during the past three decades, and inter-jurisdictional management considerations. The inland catfish summit focused on current regulations, statewide programs, the experimental stocking of blue catfish in Dillon and Hoover reservoirs, and emerging inter-jurisdictional concerns on the Ohio River.
- The division's permitting section participated in the Lean Six Sigma process to identify areas of potential improvement in the permit process. Ten permits were identified by their type and approval structure, and potentially affected individuals, were invited to participate in the process. With the assistance of the Office of Information and Technology, the division will implement SharePoint software as an initial process improvement.

CONNECTIONS INITIATIVES FOR 2014

- Develop interactive wildlife area use maps that identify habitat types to enhance public use of these areas.
- Complete the third phase of the Lake Erie Birding Trail, which will increase participation and awareness of the trail and the Lake Erie region. More than 120,000 wildlife viewers from around the world will participate in Magee Marsh Boardwalk's 25th Anniversary in May.
- Continue to explore, develop, and implement a customer engagement plan to recruit, retain, and reactivate Division of Wildlife supporters.

TRADITIONS

TRADITIONS ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2013

- County wildlife officers and wildlife officer supervisors participated and staffed more than 230 conservation events and 205 youth hunting and fishing events, trapper education workshops, shooting sports events, and other skill-building opportunities.
- Expanded angler recruitment opportunities through partnership events, increased grant funding, and education events. Family and youth fishing events were hosted in each wildlife district as well as through partnership events at several state parks.

TRADITIONS INITIATIVES FOR 2014

- Implement in-service training with in-person and online methods to train 125 additional hunter and trapper education instructors. Trainings will discuss policies and procedures, federal aid requirements, and other pertinent topics.
- Expand family and youth fishing events with parks and municipalities.
- Launch an improved online Fish Ohio application process, allowing users to register Fish Ohio-length catches and view a database of other trophy catches from all bodies of water. Users will also have the ability to include a photo of their Fish Ohio catch on a printable certificate.
- Host the 30th annual Wildlife Diversity Conference, providing an annual forum for approximately 1,000 naturalists, educators, and wildlife enthusiasts.

EXCELLENCE

EXCELLENCE ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2013

- Implemented a mobile game check option to report deer and turkey harvests.
- Received two prestigious national awards for communications and outreach endeavors from the Association for Conservation Information. This includes second place in the Website category and third place in the Online Community Engagement category.
- Increased oversight of expenditures and improved efficiency with sportsmen's dollars. This provided for additional activities to be cost-shared through the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration grants in excess of \$5 million.

EXCELLENCE INITIATIVES FOR 2014

- Implement electronic fishing and hunting licenses for mobile devices.
- Complete the wildlife officer cadet academy and field training program.
- Continue to update deer population goals and management units with input and analysis from the wildlife management and research staff, the deer working group, and The Ohio State University.
- Expand the development and use of SharePoint software to improve internal communications.