



MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DUCK HUNTERS ASSOCIATION
 A NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATION OF, BY, AND FOR THE DUCK
 HUNTERS.



MARCH 2025

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MDC AND GRHA

Inside this month's newsletter you will find a recent notification from MDC in an cooperative agreement with the Great Rivers Habitat Alliance (GRHA). From that notification:

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and the Great Rivers Habitat Alliance (GRHA) recently entered into a cooperative agreement to protect habitat and add public and educational opportunities on nearly 785 privately-owned acres of prime wetland habitat in St. Charles County previously known as the Whistling Wings Duck Club. The Missouri Conservation Commission formally recognized the new partnership at its Feb. 7 open meeting in Jefferson City.

Now, this cooperative agreement includes \$2 million in financial support from MDC to GRHA of YOUR tax dollars. Looking at GRHA, from their website, <https://grha.org/>, this looks like an outstanding organization. However, on the surface, and my opinion only, this organization was founded in June 2000 and their directors, well, you just have to see it, go out to the site and take a look. Very impressive I have to say. It appears they have the money to do just about anything. They have only been around since 2000 and get \$2 mill?

Speaking of money, why is the MDC giving them 2 million of our money to them? Granted, in the release it states: "We are thrilled about the creation of a conservation and education partnership with MDC and our shared vision to protect and conserve the property for generations to come," said GRHA President David Bub. "We look forward to developing public-use programs that align with GRHA, and MDC's mission including conservation demonstration, education, research, and hunting. Hunting programs will focus on recruiting new hunters, youth, veterans, women, educators, and first responders." This property will not be a part of MDC's managed waterfowl hunt program. So I question this last quoted statement.

In my mind, simple as it is, should not OUR tax payer dollars be spent in promoting hunting programs where the public DOES see the benefit of THEIR tax payer dollars? For example: How about cleaning up Columbia Bottoms, at least cut down the weeds around the old center. Relook at better management of Columbia bottoms and return it to the jewel of MDC as it once was. How about Marais Temp Claire? Relook at better management of Marais Temp Claire to increase duck population or to attract more ducks. Relook at more hunting opportunities for those who pay these taxes, if MDC is going to assist in acquiring new property, at least have it part of managed waterfowl hunts instead of what it appears on the surface, money going to an exclusive private club on the guise of conservation.

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MEMBERS MEETING

For this month's members meeting we are going to have shotgun deep cleaning with Gun Smith Eric Olson. With the end of the season this is a very prudent meeting before we put our guns up before next season. He is going to be bringing in an 870, a Benelli and a Beretta for discussion. If you recall, he was coming for our February meeting but had to cancel due to sickness. He has graciously agreed to come to this month's meeting to give the discussion.

So come on out and bring your membership dues if not paid!

ANNUAL DUES

Your annual membership dues are due now. Please consider renewing your membership dues of \$25. If you have not paid your dues yet, you can bring your money to the next members meeting or mail your check to the address on the back.

I sent an email out to those who on the email listing that are still outstanding with your membership dues. Please consider on renewing your membership. You will be terminated if you do not renew.

TROUT TRIP UPDATE

Our annual trout trip to Trout Hollow will be this coming weekend after our monthly members meeting. A couple of reminders and notes to include.

If you are bringing anything to be cooked at the Saturday night dinner please make sure it is thawed out before you bring it to be cooked.

On Friday night, when everybody shows up, we are planning on meeting across the street at Mr. Gibertie Place for dinner at 6:30 PM. Please plan for your arrival so we can all meet up. The menu for Mr. Gilbertie Place is at: <https://mrgilberti.com/menu/>

If you are bringing a side dish for all to enjoy, please let Jerry know what you are bringing so we do not have three different potato salads on the table. I for one will be bringing potato salad.

DO NOT FORGET TO RENEW YOUR TROUT PERMIT, THEY EXPIRED 28 FEBRUARY.

DO NOT FORGET TO RENEW YOUR FISHING PERMIT IF YOU NEED ONE. (UNDER 65)

AVIAN FLU

MDC encourages public to use caution amidst suspected avian influenza outbreak

The Department is investigating numerous reports of sick and dead waterfowl across Missouri.

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. -- The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is monitoring reports of sick and dead waterfowl, such as geese and ducks, across the state. The Department is actively collecting birds to determine the cause of illness but suspects highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) to be the cause. Other states, including Kansas and Iowa, are experiencing similar occurrences.

Avian influenza, commonly referred to as bird flu, spreads as birds along the North American flyways intermingle with infected birds from Europe and Asia. The viruses are transmitted from bird to bird through fecal droppings, saliva, and nasal discharges. There is a risk for spillover from wild birds into domestic poultry and then back again from poultry to wild birds, resulting in further spread.

Though HPAI does not present an immediate public health concern, MDC recommends the following:

Do not touch dead geese, waterfowl, or other bird species.

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Report any sightings of dead geese to MDC online at <http://short.mdc.mo.gov/4KD>

Ensure that pets do not come into contact with dead animals to help prevent the spread of disease.

If you have inadvertently come into contact with a dead goose, wash your hands thoroughly and contact a healthcare professional if you experience any unusual symptoms.

Due to ongoing waterfowl hunting seasons, waterfowl hunters should dress game birds in the field whenever possible or at a location away from poultry or other birds. Hunters should also properly dispose of harvest waste by placing the remains in trash bags and disposing of them through trash collection or a permitted landfill. Bald eagles and other raptors are particularly susceptible to avian influenza. This simple action could help prevent bald eagle and other raptor mortalities.

Hunters should also be aware it is possible to transport avian influenza viruses on boats, waders, or other equipment, especially if it isn't dry before moving it from one site to another. Allowing hunting equipment to dry between outings will reduce this chance.

Avian influenza does not present an immediate public health concern, though on rare occasions it has infected humans and other animals. It is safe to eat poultry and wild game as normal cooking temperatures are hot enough to kill the virus if present. Meat should be cooked to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

More information can be found on the Missouri Department of

Agriculture website at <https://agriculture.mo.gov/avian-influenza.php>.

DELTA BANQUET

Confluence Chapter – St. Louis, MO

Saturday, March 22, 2025

Location: Christie Banquet Center, 9000 Veterans Memorial Parkway, O'Fallon, MO 63366

Doors Open – 6:00 PM | Dinner – 7:00 PM

Youth Ticket – Free

Single Ticket – \$60

Couples Ticket – \$110

Silver Sponsor Table of 8 – \$500

Gold Sponsor Table of 8 – \$1,000

Platinum Sponsor Table of 8 – \$2,500

For more information contact: Richard Viehmann at (314) 809-2774 | rich@marshmadmen.com

You can purchase tickets at:

<https://deltawaterfowl.org/confluence-chapter-st-louis-mo/>

If purchasing tickets online, your tickets will be at the door. Please bring your emailed receipt as proof of purchase.

MDC AND GRHA

From an email I received from MDC:

MDC is working with Great River Habitat Alliance to protect and enhance waterfowl opportunities in St. Louis area

New GRHA property in St. Charles will create innovative partnerships in education, research, mentored and special hunts for the public.

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and the Great Rivers

Habitat Alliance (GRHA) recently entered into a cooperative agreement to protect habitat and add public and educational opportunities on nearly 785 privately-owned acres of prime wetland habitat in St. Charles County previously known as the Whistling Wings Duck Club. The Missouri Conservation Commission formally recognized the new partnership at its Feb. 7 open meeting in Jefferson City.

The property lies just outside of St. Louis within the Confluence Region, an area recognized by the North American Waterfowl Management Plan as a priority Waterfowl Conservation Region. This is an important "Conservation Opportunity Area" and is specifically identified in Missouri's Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy as an area in need of conservation. The property is a mix of natural and agricultural habitats and holds a 330-acre refuge which is a significant migratory stopover for ducks, geese, and shorebirds during spring and fall migrations.

The former private duck club was recently acquired by GRHA from Ducks Unlimited. GRHA will own and operate the property for the purpose to forever protect, preserve and conserve the agricultural and natural areas for significant public benefit. The property will serve as GRHA's new headquarters and be a center for education, scientific research programs, land-management workshops, and managed public-hunting opportunities. The headquarters will be named the Jay and Carolyn Henges Wetland Education and Conservation Center in honor of the Henges Foundation financial support to GRHA. Jay Henges also served as a Conservation Commissioner from 1987 to 1993.

"We are thrilled about the creation of a conservation and education partnership with MDC and our shared vision to protect and conserve the property for generations to come," said GRHA President David Bub. "We look forward to developing public-use programs that align with GRHA, and MDC's mission including conservation demonstration, education, research, and hunting. Hunting programs will focus on recruiting new hunters, youth, veterans, women, educators, and first responders."

The cooperative agreement includes \$2 million in financial support from MDC to GRHA to help with acquisition of the property and to maintain critical wetland and waterfowl habitat on the area. These funds will also support mentored hunting opportunities for new hunters, veterans, youth, and others. The property will not be a part of MDC's managed waterfowl hunt program.

"The Missouri Department of Conservation is excited about our new partnership with the Great Rivers Habitat Alliance and the new opportunities we will have to provide high-quality mentored hunting on the property," said MDC Director Jason Summers. "MDC staff will also be able to use the property to offer educational programs and habitat workshops."

GRHA was founded in 2000 to protect the confluence 100-year floodplain of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers through policy, protection, conservation, public awareness and education. GRHA collaborates with partners such as MDC to restore wetlands and to protect their conservation, flood storage, and habitat values in perpetuity by teaming up with farmers, duck clubs, and other land stewards to protect

land and land-use practices important to wildlife, waterfowl, and people. Learn more at grha.org/.

MFOR

Craig Sondker is getting together a new, it is not necessarily a club, I guess it would be considered an organization called MFOR, Missouri Federation of Outdoor Resources, similar to IFOR in Illinois.

To give you an idea, from the IFOR website of:

<https://if-or.com/>

What is IFOR?

IFOR is a unique coalition of individuals and organizations. We are one of the most unusual sportsmen's groups anywhere because we don't blow the horn or promote the cause of any single special interest group. IFOR represents all outdoorsmen, all sportsmen, and all recreational users. We believe it is critical that we all band together under one large umbrella organization to form a united front against those who would take from us what is rightfully ours.

MISSION STATEMENT

To unite all outdoor resource user groups and conservationists (ex. hunters, fishermen, trappers, trail riders, etc.), dedicated to preserving, restoring and developing the State's natural resources, and to provide a professional liaison to the Illinois Legislature and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), to protect sportsmen's rights and recreational opportunities; and to work together to ensure long-term, adequate dedicated funding for, and professional management of the IDNR.

IFOR is a not-for-profit 501 C (4) Conservation Organization whose main purpose is to unite

Illinois Outdoorsmen under one statewide umbrella and protect and defend the recreational rights of natural resource users in the state of Illinois. Currently we have united over 100 conservation groups and in excess of 76,000 outdoorsmen as members of IFOR.

This is exactly what we need here in Missouri. Granted, after chatting a bit with Tony, CFM does this similarly, however, if we have another avenue to voice our opinions would be a great thing. More organizations and individuals under one voice to ensure our outdoor activities, be it hunting, fishing or any outdoor activity is to remain here currently and for the next generation. With the current policies that MDC is doing now, it is more than important to get organized, in which case we might be too late, for example: River blinds taken away, even when it was totally against by hunters, MDC turned a blind ear. Columbia Bottoms, the once jewel of MDC looks like a slum and now this cooperative agreement with the Great Rivers Habitat Alliance.

We need a larger voice to be heard. Not just single individuals or group voicing concerns to MDC and Jefferson City and this could be the answer.

Craig has set up an organizational meeting of MFOR on :

1 June 2025 at 12:30 PM

At American Vets Post 106

360 Brown Road

St. Peters MO

Craig would like a head count of who might show up. You can either let him know or reply to this email if you plan on going and I will get the word to him.

EMPEROR GOOSE

Looking for some articles for filler came across this one from Delta. Do not know if we have too many trophy hunters but this one might be of interest if you are:

USFWS and State of Alaska to Close Hunting of Emperor Geese

Federal regulations reopened hunting of the species in 2017, but a decline in population signals closure per the current management plan

Federal, state, and regional wildlife managers have recommended that the emperor goose hunting season in Alaska be closed for both subsistence and sport hunting in the 2025 season. The most recent survey information recorded a single-year population index of approximately 19,000—well below the 23,000-threshold set by the Pacific Flyway Council's management plan to allow hunting.

Emperor geese, known for their striking white heads, gray bodies, orange feet, and two-tone pink and gray beaks, breed primarily on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in western Alaska. Unlike many waterfowl species, they generally remain in Alaska year-round, wintering along coastal areas like Kodiak and the Aleutian Islands.

Federal regulations reopened the emperor goose hunting season in 2017, allowing Alaska an annual harvest of up to 1,000 birds for the fall-winter hunt under liberal regulations or 500 under restrictive regulations. Harvest is managed through a registration permit system across seven hunt areas, each with an individual quota. A total of 25 non-resident drawing permits

were available to non-residents per year.

“Like any wild population, many factors affect the population growth, decline, or stability,” said Julian Fischer, a supervisory wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “For emperor geese, which are slow to mature and reproduce, adult birds are critical to population stability.” He explained that harvesting adults, along with habitat changes, food availability, and potential pathogens, are all possible contributors to the recent decline.

Fischer also emphasized the unique challenges of managing this species, explaining that with a small, remote population like emperor geese which are entirely reliant on natural habitats, significant events like storms or disease outbreaks can have outsized impacts. Predators, such as Arctic and red foxes, may also play a role in population changes.

Jason Schamber, waterfowl program coordinator for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, emphasized that these factors are taken into consideration when re-evaluating the species' management plan, which happens every three years.

“We're currently in the process of revising the Pacific Flyway Management Plan and the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council is responsible for managing the subsistence harvest in the state. So, both of those plans are open to revision currently,” he said.

The proposed rule to implement the closure will be available to the public soon, where public input will be welcomed and later considered in the final rule.

You can find more information regarding emperor goose hunting

regulations for the fall-winter season on the Alaska Fish and Game website, adfg.alaska.gov.

NEWSLETTER

As part of membership to the Mississippi Valley Duck Hunters Association this newsletter is distributed to the members either by mail or via email. All members who have an email address will be receiving this newsletter via email. With the cost of postage, printing, labeling and handling on the increase this will save YOUR MVDHA a little over \$1.50 per month per member that can be used in other areas. That is a substantial savings, with a projected cost savings of over \$250.00 a year if all members received the newsletter via email. If you still wish to receive your newsletter via snail mail, just let me know at the next member's meeting or if you wish to no longer receive it by snail mail and want to save the association funds you can provide me your email address by sending me an email at mvdha@mvdha.com. Please consider this, it will save the association money over the time of your membership that can be used else where.

2024—2025 SEASON

Light Goose Conservation Order

Season: Feb. 7 through April 30, 2025 Limits: No daily or possession limits

Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset

Up Coming Events

Mar 12 : Shotgun Deep Cleaning with Gun Smith Eric Olson (Rescheduled from the February Meeting)

General Information

This newsletter is distributed to our active members. For non-active members check the website for the current newsletter. We have our general meeting the second Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM and our Board of Directors' Meeting every fourth Monday at 7 PM. Members meetings are held at Borgettis Bar & Grill 1667 South Old Hwy 141 Fenton MO. Board Meetings are held at various locations, contact Jerry Mercurio at 314-603-6548 for this month's location. In case of bad weather call Ken Liebel at 314-822-8030 or Jerry Mercurio at 314-603-6548.

Visit YOUR web site at <https://mvdha.com> to get the most recent news, events and updates. There you will find this newsletter and other helpful information concerning conservation and the great outdoors that we love. If you would like to be added to the email listing of important news and updates you can do that through the web site through the contact us link, fill out the form and make sure you add your email address.

Any comments or suggestions concerning the newsletter or the website can be sent to mvdha@mvdha.com. I am always looking forwards to suggestions concerning content and what you would like to see or be presented in these publications.

Next members meeting: March 12, 2025

Next Board Meeting: March 24, 2025

Members are invited to the Board Meeting

Member's meeting start at 7:30, Board meeting starts at 7:00

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DUCK HUNTERS ASSN. INC.

"A Nonprofit Association of, by, and for the Duck Hunters"

"ST. LOUIS' NONPROFIT ASSOCIATION"

P.O. BOX 6, VALLEY PARK, MO 63088

