

United Northern Sportmen's News

Conservation Pledge: I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully to defend from waste, the natural resources of my country - its' air, soil and minerals, its' forests, waters and wildlife.

VOLUME 6

AUGUST 2022

NUMBER 8

\$12.00

Club Calendar

**Ranges Closed on Mondays,
for Maintenance, Reserved Activities**

- Aug. 3** **UNS Board Meeting
6:00pm, Clubhouse**
- Sept. 2-5** **Club and Ranges Closed**
- Sept. 7** **UNS Board Meeting
6:00pm, Clubhouse**
- Sept. 17** **Ruffed & Spruce Grouse
Hunting Begins**
- Sept. 19** **Retired Police Recertifica-
tion Event, Steve Holt**
- Sept. 24** **Waterfowl Opening**
- Sept. 24** **Take a Kid Hunting Wkend**
- Nov. 5** **Deer Opening - Firearms**

All members are encouraged to attend. Please RSVP Eric at gonefishing0101@hotmail.com. If the meeting is via Zoom a connection will be provided when you RSVP.

RANGE USE CALENDAR

may be found on our Website:
www.unitednorthernsportsmen.org

SHOOTING HOURS

Range hours are 8am to 30 minutes before sunset. All ranges are closed on Mondays. Range opening and closing times are posted on the ranges and the bulletin board on the Clubhouse Bldg. Please obey the rules or you may lose your shooting privileges.

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE: Monthly newsletters are sent before the end of the previous month. Articles are due by the 15th of the previous month. If you have an article or pictures you would like to share please send to sue@b-green.us.

The United Northern Sportsmen's Club, a 501(c)3 Charitable Organization

Newer members may not know our club was organized as and still is a 501(c)3 nonprofit charitable organization. We were formed as a corporation back on January 15, 1946 by thirteen original members. One of the main purposes of our organization is to encourage the conservation of our natural resources. Over the last nearly 77 years we have been involved in a number of important conservation initiatives. In the 1960's, we helped Willard Munger pass legislation that started the clean up of the St. Louis River Estuary and establish the WLSSD. This has been an ongoing project and we currently donate to and support the St. Louis River Alliance. In the 1970's, UNS participated in the successful effort to stop the dumping of taconite tailings into Lake Superior. The club also helped to get the Canosia State Wildlife Management Area established. We are always looking for conservation opportunities and welcome any suggestions.

UNS Hosts St. Louis County Sheriff's Volunteer Rescue Squad Training Event

As part of the United Northern Sportsmen Club's ongoing effort to support and give back to the community, the club recently allowed one of our county's organizations the use of our facility for training purposes. The Saint Louis County Sheriff's Volunteer Rescue Squad is a group of citizen volunteers who respond to calls involving wilderness search and rescue, boat and water safety, first aid, and public safety. They have also been involved in disaster relief. As part of the St. Louis County Sheriff's Department, they were organized back on August 23, 1958 and have been providing services to the county for close to 64 years. Part of their responsibilities include water/ice rescue including underwater rescue operations. Recently, on Saturday, July 30, UNS was happy to provide them with the use of our boat launch area and waterfront to conduct training. It was interesting to watch them go through their drills and exercises. They have used our facilities for this purpose in the past and we look forward to continuing to help them out.

United Northern Sportsmen has a long history with the rescue squad and back in 1958, helped them with funding the purchase of their first rescue vehicle. For many years, they have graciously attended and provided support at our annual ice fishing contest held on Island Lake. Those of you who have been at the ice fishing contest likely recall seeing their trucks, ice rescue vehicles, and staff at this event. We appreciate all they do for our community.

UNS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Minutes JULY 6, 2022

Call to Order: by President Tom Wasbotten at 6:05pm. **Conservation Pledge** was recited.

Roll Call of Officers: Tom Wasbotten, Lance Parthe, Bob Kuettel, Tina Sund, Jeff Jarvela, Vickie Jensen, Eric Hansen, Ron Cretens, Maggie Cretens.

Excused Officers: Gene Shaw, Lance Haavisto, John Bathke, Keith Darsow, John Jones.

Correspondence: Gnesen newsletter, Shoreland letter, registered mail receipt.

Agenda Additions & Approval: Motion to approve the agenda with new additions (M/S/C).

Reading of Minutes: Eric Hansen read the minutes from the June 1st Board of Directors meeting. Motion made to accept the minutes as read (M/S/C).

Treasurer's Report: Tina Sund as of 6/30/22: Tina asked if bills that need to be paid before the next meeting could be emailed to officers for their approval? Discussion followed on what procedure to follow. Decided to have Tom pre-sign blank checks as needed. Motion made to approve the financials and pay the bills (M/S/C).

Membership Secretary's Report: Tina Sund as of 6/30/22: Current membership is 1545 with a loss of 17 memberships. Individual Membership renewals: 55 and 13 new, Family Membership renewals: 49, 2 individuals and 10 new. 135 renewals are coming up, 92 second notices.

OTHER REPORTS:

Web Master: Eric Hansen made updates/reminders to the UNS website and Facebook page with range reservations, events.

Facilities Committee: Tom Wasbotten spoke about ordering plaques to put by trees that Jon Polecheck planted, honoring past members. Tom thinks we should get about 8 plaques. Lance Parthe reports the well water test came back and results were all under the set minimum. Well testing is \$250 and will be an annual expense. Lance found a bolt to repair riding lawn mowers. Clay pigeon throwers keep breaking because of being used incorrectly. Lance can reconstruct 2 new throwers with left over parts. Shower complaint was checked out.

Range and Grounds Calendar - Bob Kuettel & Lance Parthe: Steve Holt range reservation date changed to Sept 19th. Lance Parthe – Steel Archery Target Pedestals are embedded in the ground and frost damages them. Lance wants to build wood structures around targets at a cost of about \$400.00 that can be stored in UNS garage. There is a group of three people who need to get qualified & need time on the Range but Bob has not heard back from them.

Incident Report: Lance Parthe reports spent brass that we used to recycle is now being removed by people on the shooting range. Camp Host will watch for people illegally removing brass.

Volunteer Awards: Vickie has nothing new to report.

Grant Committee: Gene Shaw not present.

Communication Committee: John Bathke not present.

OLD BUSINESS:

Web Site Committee: Lance Parthe has a working front end web site that needs to be reviewed by committee.

Volunteer Awards Committee – Vickie Jensen: Nothing new to report.

Accounting Systems Committee – Bob Kuettel: The committee is waiting for the new web site to be completed to see what we need. Will audit financials after meeting.

Community & Charitable Donations Committee: Maggie Cretens & Sara Spindler met and are starting to brainstorm ideas.

NEW BUSINESS:

Fourth of July Weekend: Tom Wasbotten was on site, campground was full. Ron Cretens said lots of families were here having a good time.

Firearm Safety Instructor Training Class: Lance Parthe reported that Mike Hart is looking for volunteers to take Instructor Class and would like it to be advertised in the UNS newsletter; it will also be posted on UNS web site and Facebook page.

St Louis Cty Sheriff Volunteer Rescue Squad Request: Tom Wasbotten reports they have requested Saturday, July 30th for training. A motion was made to allow Rescue Squad to use our facilities (M/S/C).

UNS Youth Field Day 2023: Tom Wasbotten asked Lance Parthe & Maggie Cretens to start planning for 2023.

Donation: Lance Parthe reports the Northern Deer Hunters Association is looking to donate to UNS an on-going \$500 donation. Lance has not heard back from them.

Closed Executive Session – Tom Wasbotten

Next Meeting Date & Adjournment: Next meeting at the clubhouse Wednesday, August 3rd, 6 pm. Meeting adjourned at 7:48pm (M/S/C).

Respectfully submitted by Eric Hansen, Secretary.

RUFFED GROUSE COUNTS UP UNEXPECTEDLY FROM LAST YEAR

Sharp-tailed grouse population also sees increase in east-central Minnesota.

Minnesota's ruffed grouse spring population counts are up from last year, which was not expected during the current declining phase of the 10-year cycle — a pattern recorded for 72 years.

“While ruffed grouse drumming counts are up, they are not a reliable way to predict the fall hunting season,” said Charlotte Roy, grouse project leader with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. “We also recorded an increase in sharp-tailed grouse in east-central Minnesota, which is positive this year but could be short-lived.”

Unexpectedly high ruffed grouse counts this year may have resulted from the warm temperatures and dry conditions last year during May and June, which favors high nest success and chick survival. Snow conditions also were favorable during winter for roosting throughout much of the core of grouse range.

The DNR and its partners use spring drumming counts to help monitor the ruffed grouse breeding population through time. Drumming is a low sound produced by males as they beat their wings rapidly and in increasing frequency to signal the location of their territory. Drumming displays also attract females that are ready to begin nesting. Ruffed grouse populations are surveyed by counting the number of male ruffed grouse heard drumming on established routes throughout the state's forested regions.

“In a typical year, we have 16 cooperating organizations providing folks to help us count grouse drumming,” Roy said. “We are grateful to our federal and tribal partners for their assistance in completing routes.”

Historically, these spring counts were related to the fall population; however, in recent years, drumming counts have not reliably predicted the fall hunting season.

The number of birds present during the fall hunting season also depends upon nesting success and chick survival during the spring and summer. Nesting success and chick survival are influenced by many factors, including weather during May and June, which has been more extreme in recent years, and other factors, including disease and predators. This year in May and June, heavy rainfall and flooding affected much of the core of ruffed grouse range.

The ruffed grouse survey report can be found on the grouse management page of the DNR website (mndnr.gov/Wildlife/Grouse.html).

Minnesota's sharp-tailed grouse population has increased significantly in the east-central portion of the state, according to spring population counts conducted by the DNR and cooperating organizations.

The population increase follows the closure of the 2021 hunting season in east-central Minnesota, but does not signify long-term recovery of the population. The number of leks — traditional male display areas also called dancing grounds — counted in the east-central region remains low and the leks are smaller than those in areas with abundant sharp-tailed grouse.

“The increase in the east-central region should be regarded cautiously, as warm, dry conditions during spring and summer 2021, followed by favorable winter snow roosting conditions, likely resulted in strong nest success, chick survival and overwinter survival,” Roy said. “But we know threats remain for the birds in this area, including habitat loss, as well as more random events like strong storms, flooding and disease outbreaks.”

To count sharp-tailed grouse, observers look for males displaying on leks. This year's statewide average of 12.2 sharp-tailed grouse per lek was similar to the long-term average since 1980, but a drop in the number of leks in the east-central region, in the absence of changes in survey effort, indicate that the population has dropped significantly in that portion of the range. These changes are thought to be driven largely by habitat loss.

“... in the east-central region the large, open areas of grassland and brushland that sharp-tailed grouse need are changing and becoming less suitable,” Roy said. “These birds require areas of approximately one to three square miles of grassland and brushland, so managing their habitats often requires cooperation between multiple landowners.”

The Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society (MSGs), Pheasants Forever and others have collaborated with the DNR on targeted habitat management for sharp-tailed grouse in the east-central range and remain committed to enhancing open-land habitats.

The sharp-tailed grouse survey report is found on the grouse management page of website (mndnr.gov/Wildlife/Grouse.html).

The Minnesota ruffed grouse and spruce grouse hunting season will be from Saturday, Sept. 17 through Sunday, Jan. 1. The sharp-tailed grouse hunting season will remain closed in Minnesota's east-central zone. There will be a 2022 hunting season in the northwest sharp-tailed grouse zone from Sept. 17 through Wednesday, Nov. 30.

Grouse hunting information can be found on the grouse hunting page of the DNR website (mndnr.gov/Hunting/Grouse).

UNS SHOOTING RANGE ETIQUETTE

Since May we have mostly been centered around the fishing and camping UNS has to offer. But the DNR is now announcing the availability of the 2021 Hunting Regulations. One of the things hunters do to get ready for the season is to sight-in their guns. Of course that isn't the only reason for using our ranges. Some come to practice shooting and others for the fun of shooting. We have a big bore or rifle range, we have a trap range, a pistol range, a long gun range, and an archery range. The best way to prevent accidents is to follow gun range etiquette. Here are some tips for gun range etiquette that will keep you and others around you safe and ensure you have a great time when you visit the range.

Review and Follow the Range's Rules

There are all types of ranges out there. Each has its own list of specific rules which are often listed near the shooting area or on their website. Take the time to review the rules beforehand for the range you're visiting and familiarize yourself with them. It's a safe bet that all gun ranges have at least a few cardinal rules about gun handling that everyone should respect, such as never pointing a gun in anyone's direction or, at UNS, to shoot only range-approved targets. It's good etiquette to leave the range better than you found it. But, they may also have fines for shooters that damage property on the gun range, including structural areas. So read through their list, before your visit if possible, and let their regulations seep in.

Always Handle a Firearm Like a Pro

Handling a gun professionally extends to when you're not actually shooting it. All professional gun owners know how to handle a gun responsibly so no one, including themselves, can get hurt. This means automatically removing your finger from the trigger the second you've stopped shooting. This is a memory reflex which often needs to be developed over time, but it will differentiate you as a gun owner that takes shooting seriously. You also never want to point the muzzle at anybody or anything other than your target. So when you're not using the gun, make sure the muzzle is always pointed in a safe direction. When shooting indoors, this means laying the gun on the table with the muzzle pointed towards the targets. The safety catch should always be on when you're not shooting, and all parts of the gun including the chamber and magazine should be completely empty of ammo. If someone wants to see your firearm, these safety precautions must be in check before handing it over to another person.

Respect the Range Safety Officer

Most gun ranges have employees on hand to ensure everyone is following the rules and shooting in a safe manner. Range safety officers have authority above everyone else visiting the range, so treat them with respect. Listen to them if they give gun range commands such as cease-fire, because that means they're making sure everyone visiting the range is safe. This is particularly important when shooting outdoors. The range safety officer won't allow anyone to go downrange to inspect their targets until everyone has emptied their ammo, engaged the safety catch, and has put down their firearm in a safe location. Although they may sound intimidating, gun range employees are friendly and willing to help if anyone has any questions or isn't sure what a particular command means. They can also help refresh your memory on a gun's components and proper handling. Don't be afraid to ask for assistance if you need it.

Remember That You Can Call a Cease Fire

The command "cease-fire" doesn't have to be shouted by only the range safety officer. It's everyone's responsibility on the range to use the command if they see something that looks unsafe. If another shooter is unwell that's an excuse to call a cease-fire. It can also be used if someone inadvertently wanders onto the range area. Good gun enthusiasts will always look out for everyone else and the safety of others.

Don't Touch Someone Else's Equipment

It's tempting to want to pick up someone else's gun especially if it's brand-name gear you've had your eye on for a while. However, that unfamiliar firearm may be loaded—plus, it's just poor manners to touch someone else's possession without asking for permission to do so. Most gun enthusiasts are more than happy to share information about their purchase and let someone else hold it, but you should ask first. They need to ensure their firearm is completely empty and they may not wish to be interrupted between rounds. Don't touch anyone else's bag or equipment unless you have permission to do so. And don't shoot at someone else's target; this can confuse them and throw off any progress they think they're making.

Don't Interrupt Another Shooter

It's unsettling to be interrupted in the middle of a round, even if it's just a tap on the shoulder. It's also dangerous; some people may instinctively whirl around to face you while still holding the gun pointed outward. The one exception is if you see another shooter doing something that can compromise the safety of themselves and others. In this case, most gun ranges will allow you to shout, "Cease fire!" and a range safety officer will handle the situation. If you wish to talk to another shooter, wait until they're finished with a round and can safely engage with you. You wouldn't want to be interrupted when you're concentrated on hitting your target. Respect another person's personal space, and their shooting time.

Pick Up Any Litter

Don't leave behind any ammo boxes, water bottles, brass casings (if they're your own) or other trash. Deposit it in provided trash bins and leave the range neat and clean for other shooters to enjoy. The one exception is sweeping up other shooters' brass casings. Some people like to keep their brass. Follow these Gun Range Etiquette rules for a safe experience.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO TEACH FIREARMS SAFETY CLASSES.

This article is an appeal to the UNS membership for volunteers. I've asked that this notice be run in several newsletters so that the majority of the 1500 members will see it.

The MN DNR is always looking for volunteers to assist with Youth Firearms Certification. Kids can get all the classroom hours online. However, they also need a day in the field with a DNR certified volunteer instructor. This is where the UNS can provide a valuable service to youth interested in hunting and shooting sports.

I have been in contact with CO David Schottenbauer the DNR Regional Training Officer. The Firearms Safety Instructor class is approximately three hours long. Once completed these instructors will be able to sign off on the firearms certification field day requirement. The commitment by Firearms Safety instructors is to do a couple of classes a year.

I hope to get a list of people willing to commit to being a Firearms Safety Instructor. Once I have a number of committed people, I'll coordinate with CO Schottenbauer to conduct a couple of courses at the UNS club house in October – September.

Anyone willing to attend the training and be a Firearms Safety Instructor please contact Mike Hart at 763-245-7268 by text or voicemail. If you have questions please call, I don't do lengthy texts.

THREE GUN SAFETY BASICS: ALWAYS keep the gun pointed in a safe direction. ALWAYS keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot. ALWAYS keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.

UNS SHOOTING RANGE RULES

Some important rules to remember when planning to use the UNS shooting ranges include:

All ranges are operated on a first come first served basis, unless otherwise posted for closures. Please exercise common courtesy, common sense, and good sportsmanship for a safe and enjoyable experience.

Ranges are open 8:00 am to 1/2. before sunset. All ranges are closed on Mondays.

Children under the age of 18 years of age must be with a parent or legal guardian Member at all times on all shooting ranges and archery areas.

- Shotgun patterning is to be done on the rifle range only.
- Only clay pigeons can be used on the trap range.
- Only UNS authorized metal gongs can be used on the 200- and 300-yard ranges.
- Centerfire rifles, black-powder arms, shotguns, or handguns larger than 45 caliber are prohibited on the pistol range.
- Automatic firearms, and trigger activators, bump stocks, or machine gun conversion kits are prohibited as per State of Minnesota Fully Law MS609.67.

NO ALCOHOL OR FDA CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES shall be used prior to or during range use.

EMAILS WANTED: Remember, the next time you renew your membership, or even tomorrow, let us know your email address so you may receive our enhanced newsletter electronically. Emails may be sent to Tina Sund.

UNITED NORTHERN SPORTSMEN'S NEWS

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www.uns-duluth.com

unsclub@gmail.com

2022 Board of Directors

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