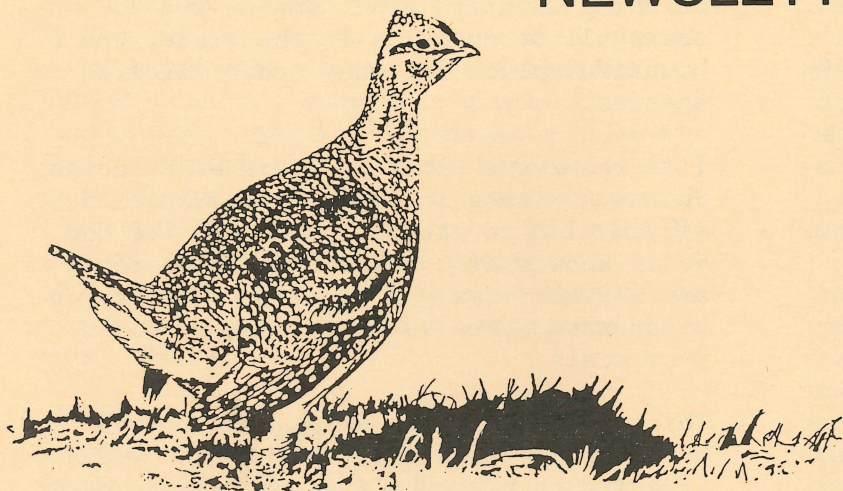


WISCONSIN SHARP-TAILED GROUSE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Volume 2

Spring, 1991

THE FUTURE OF SHARPTAIL HUNTING

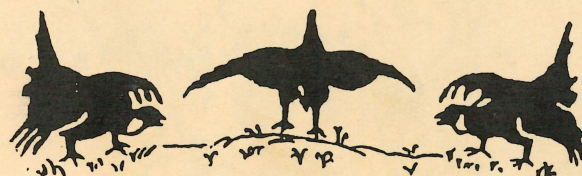
Sharptail hunters should be aware of potential changes coming their way via questions on the Conservation Congress spring questionnaire.

The DNR Prairie Grouse Committee met this past December. Biologists agree that the decline in sharptails over the past 50 years is mainly due to habitat losses rather than gun pressure. But there does come a point when numbers are low where one has to look seriously at what additional pressure can be tolerated. Bird numbers on the managed properties are doing well right now, and the committee wants to be able to allow continued hunting but also does not want to push this bird onto the threatened species list.

Question one on the questionnaire is: Do you favor requiring hunters to have a free permit to hunt sharp tailed grouse beginning in 1992? The Department knows there are not a lot of sharptail hunters but could firm up their estimates of numbers and harvest if this question were favored. A side benefit of a permit for

the WSTGS is that we could probably get this list and perhaps increase our members. Questions two is: Do you favor passage and approval of legislation authorizing the Department to establish a variable quota system to regulate the harvest of sharp tailed grouse? This system would allow the Department to regulate sharptail harvest based on population changes as monitored by spring breeding counts. The present system of regulation is cumbersome being based on various closed areas and season and bag length restrictions. These two questions both entail restrictions, but one of the possible alternatives if they are not favored is a season closure.

The WSTGS should discuss this topic at the spring meeting and decide if they want to take a position on these questions. Certainly all members should plan on attending the Conservation Congress hearings, held in each county, on Monday, April 22nd, and speaking up on this issue of importance to them.



FIRST SOCIETY MEETING

Reserve the weekend of April 12th - 13th for the first gathering of the clan at Paradise Shores on Lake Holcombe. This is in the heart of the farm fringe sharptail range and close to Pershing Wildlife Area. While we have some business that needs to be attended to this will mostly be a chance to get to know each other, see some kinds and have some fun.

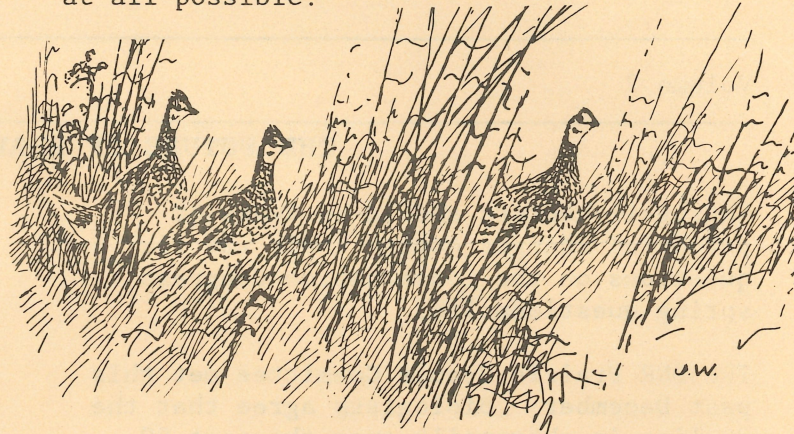
On Friday evening we'll check in and have an informal gathering. We'll take up a collection to cover refreshments. If some of you bring along a stick of sausage or a hunk of cheese, or whatever delicacy you'd like to share I'm sure it would be welcome. About 8:00 p.m. Frank Vanacek, local wildlife manager will hand out maps and assignments of dancing grounds.

Saturday morning comes early! About 3:30 or so we'll disperse to various dancing grounds. We'll return with our reports at breakfast at 8:00. We'll then have a business meeting probably until noon. In the afternoon Frank will lead a tour of

Pershing Wildlife Area, one of the sharptail strongholds in the state, and a bountiful place for many other wildlife species.

I'll reserve a block of rooms at Paradise Shores. Please let me know by March 15th if you plan to attend, so we can let the motel know what to expect. Winter rates are \$39.60 + tax per double. They have a restaurant there so bring cash to cover your meals.

This meeting will go a long way toward determining the direction that the WSTGS is going to take. Please try to attend if at all possible.



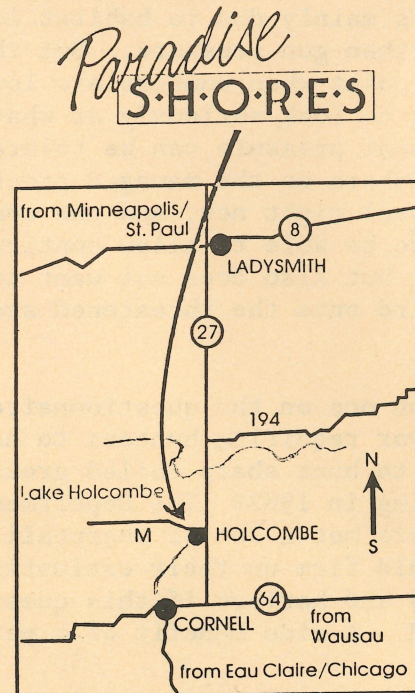
Meeting Sign Up
April 12th - 13th
Paradise Shores, Holcombe

Name _____

Room needs _____

Share a double with assigned roommate _____
Share a double with roommate of choice _____

Roommate's name _____
Single _____
Other _____
Attend meeting but not overnight _____



Located on Highway M, 1 1/2 miles west
of Highway 27.

Integrated Management on Douglas County Forest

The Douglas County Forest at 267,000 acres is the largest in the state. As with all county forests, it provides a variety of public benefits including timber, recreation, and wildlife habitat. County Forest Administrator, Dave Epperly, has recently begun looking at a management system that potentially has a lot of value for wildlife, perhaps including sharptailed grouse. This system involves short rotation, big block management on pine lands.

About 20 square miles of county forest land lie between Douglas County Wildlife Area and the Namekagon Barrens. Much of this is in good pine sites. Most tree species, pines included, put on a lot of growth in their early years and tend to slow down as they reach maturity. This system would capitalize on this early growth and harvest trees shortly after they become of commercial value, rather than keeping them until they become sawlogs. With shorter rotations a larger proportion of the land would be in a cleared state at any given time.

The benefits to wildlife can be substantial. Deer obviously do well in young forests. These areas will support a small mammal prey base necessary for raptors. To the extent that jackpine is involved in the scheme, there may be some possibilities over time for Kirtland Warbler (a federally endangered species)

to find nesting sites. On the sharptail side, we can certainly expect them to at least use the cleared sites for a dispersal corridor between the two sharptail core properties. Maybe under some circumstances, they could even set up housekeeping in the clear cuts for a time until they grow out of phase.

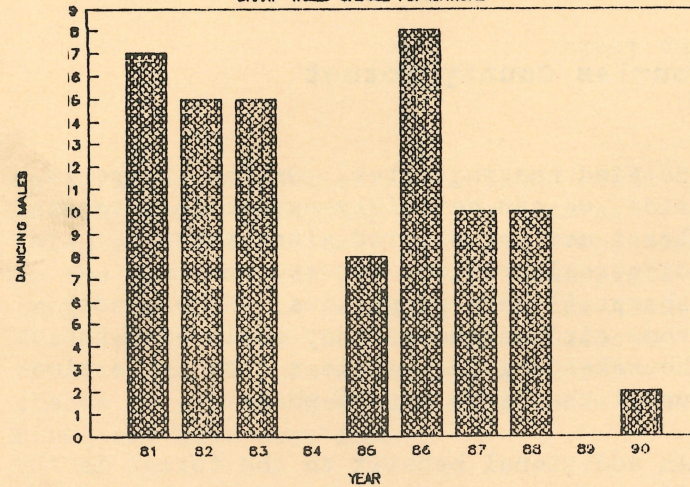
An additional benefit to the forest is the fire protection aspect. Fires can be more easily fought in a clear cut or low vegetation than in a standing forest. A good example of this is the Deer-print Lake Fire of 1989 which burned 800 acres in southern Douglas County. It had the potential to be much larger but ran into some recent clear cut where it could be effectively controlled.

This short rotation, large block system is still in the talking stages. Any changes will need to be incorporated into the 10 year forest plan. Local foresters, county board members, and Douglas County citizens all will have something to say about whether it occurs and to what extent. For now though, it looks like a positive forestry-wildlife action and one that we should encourage.



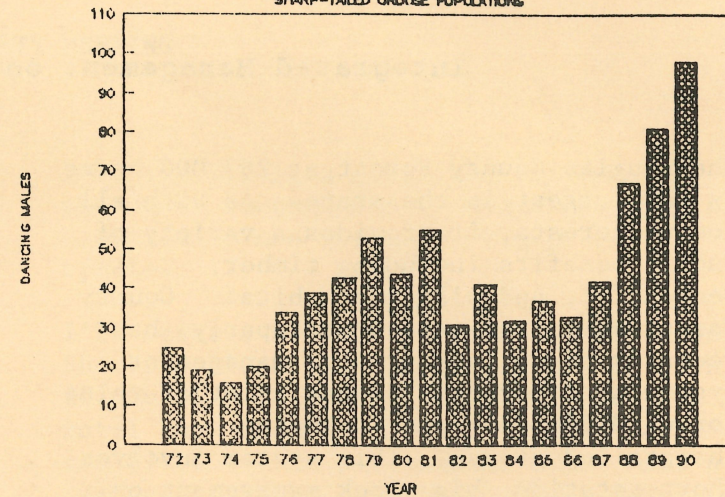
DOUGLAS COUNTY W. A.

SHARP-TAILED GROUSE POPULATIONS



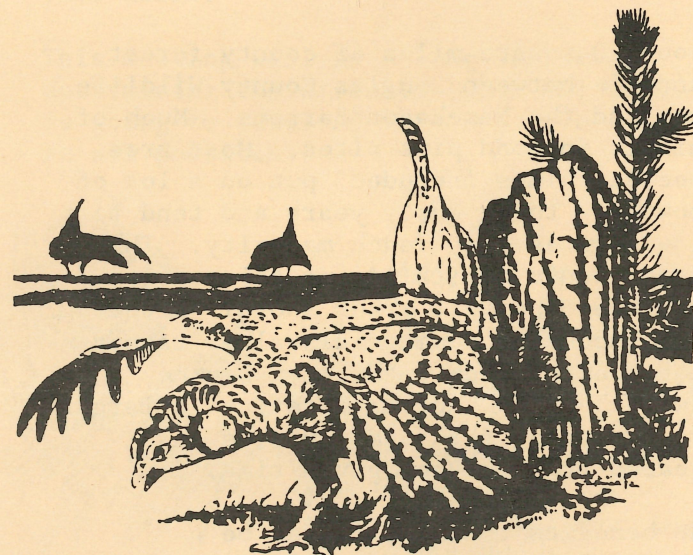
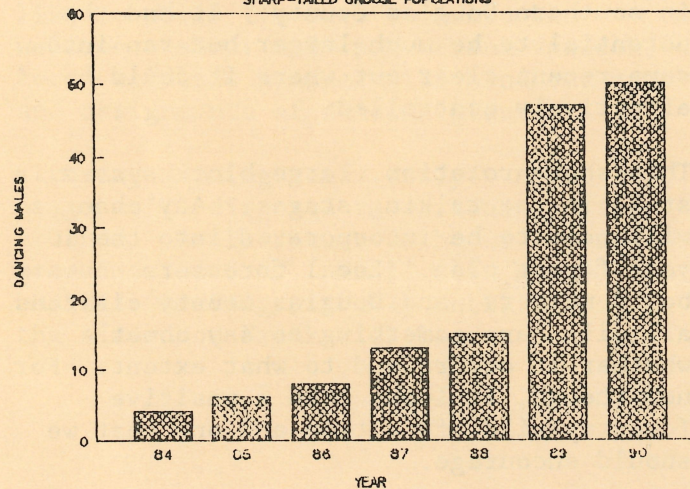
CREX MEADOWS

SHARP-TAILED GROUSE POPULATIONS



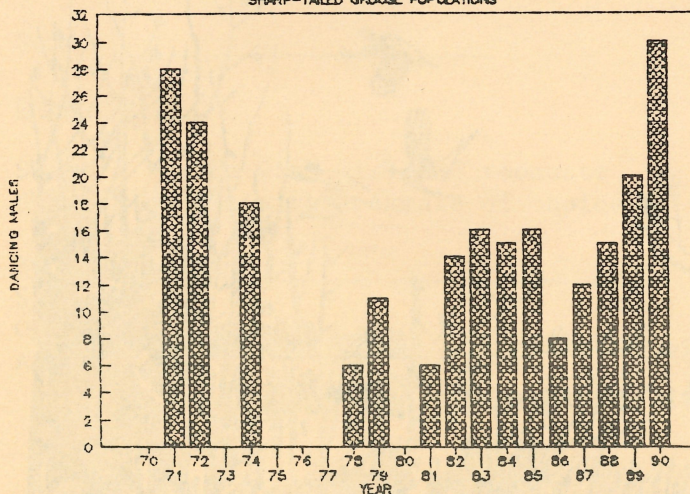
KIMBERLY-CLARK WILDLIFE AREA

SHARP-TAILED GROUSE POPULATIONS



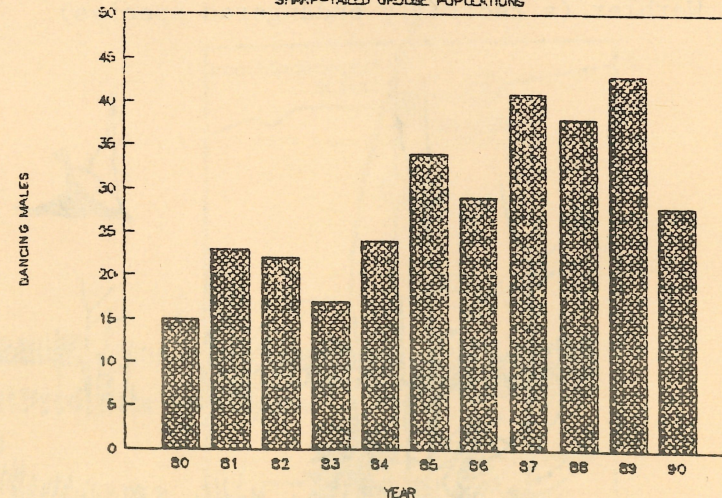
NAMEKAGON BARRENS

SHARP-TAILED GROUSE POPULATIONS



PERSHING WILDLIFE AREA

SHARP-TAILED GROUSE POPULATIONS



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The fall issue of the newsletter was mailed out to about 220 people. We had an early rush of sign-ups which has now tapered off quite a bit. As of February 1st we had 74 paid up members. I'm sure we'll get more signed up with this issue of the newsletter. It was most encouraging to receive donations of 5 to 50 dollars over dues from 28 members. This shows a lot of interest from a lot of people. We will keep track of dues and donations separately. Dues should be able to support the day to day activity, while we may want to designate gifts for special projects.

A dozen people listed below signed up on their membership return form that they were willing to serve on the Board of Directors.

Myron Anderson - Ashland
 Bob Dreis - Spooner
 Ray Anderson - Stevens Point
 Jim Evrard - Grantsburg
 Ray Biller, DVM - Balsam Lake
 Neal Niemuth - Laramie, WY
 Donald Bronk - Wausau
 Jim Shurts - Madison
 David Clausen - Amery
 Ken Von Ornum - Marengo
 Tom Davis - Bailey's Harbor
 J. B. Wilson, DVM - Milltown

This doesn't imply that we're not interested if you are also willing to step forward in a leadership role. It's possible that one or two of these people may not be able to serve, so don't be shy and please step forward with your talents!

This newsletter is being sent to the original mailing list and also to some other names that have been submitted since. If you are a paid up member that's great, don't sent us any more dues at this time. If you forgot to send in your dues the first time (or if this is your first contact), please consider joining now. People signing up through this spring newsletter will be considered charter members also.

Treasurer's Report

February 1, 1991

Income	
Dues	\$ 365.00
Donations	420.00
	<u>\$ 785.00</u>
Expenses	
Checks	7.92
Postage	35.00
Net	<u>\$ 707.08</u>

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (Annual Dues \$5.00)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Enclosed: \$ _____ dues;
 \$ _____ additional donation

Volunteer Activities

_____ Board of Directors
 _____ Newsletter Writing
 _____ Publicity
 _____ Education
 _____ Fund Raising
 _____ Other

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO AND RETURN THIS APPLICATION TO: Wisconsin Sharp-tailed Grouse Society, P.O. Box 1115, Cumberland, WI 54829

THIS AND THAT

* We've been invited to share a booth with the Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society at the Douglas County Sport and Gun Show on March 15th - 17th. Any members from that general vicinity that would volunteer to help man the booth should call Dave Evenson (715-822-3590) or Fred (715-372-4866).

* The transfer of 27 sharptails from Crex to Moquah Barrens went smoothly. Sharpies were seen by deer hunters so at least some of them were then alive and sticking around. One bird apparently decided to fly home and ran into a load of shot 20 miles west of Moquah in Brule country.

* Members who live along the Minnesota border may wish to attend the MSGS "Spring Fling" on April 12-13th instead of the Wisconsin meeting.

Their meeting will be at Northwoods Audubon Center northwest of Hinckley. Contact Roche Lally at 218-724-3355 for details.

* Thanks to Jonathan Wilde, a professional artist and WSGS member, for some of the sketches in this newsletter, and to Neal Niemuth for computerizing the mailing list.

* You'll find an insert in this newsletter for a special limited edition Grouse of North America by Tom Huggler. Tom has graciously offered to donate \$5.00 to the society for each copy ordered. This book would make a great gift to yourself or someone else. Make sure you state on your order that you are a member of the Wisconsin STGS.

Dave Evenson, Editor

Wisconsin Sharptailed Grouse Society
P.O. Box 1115
Cumberland, WI 54829

