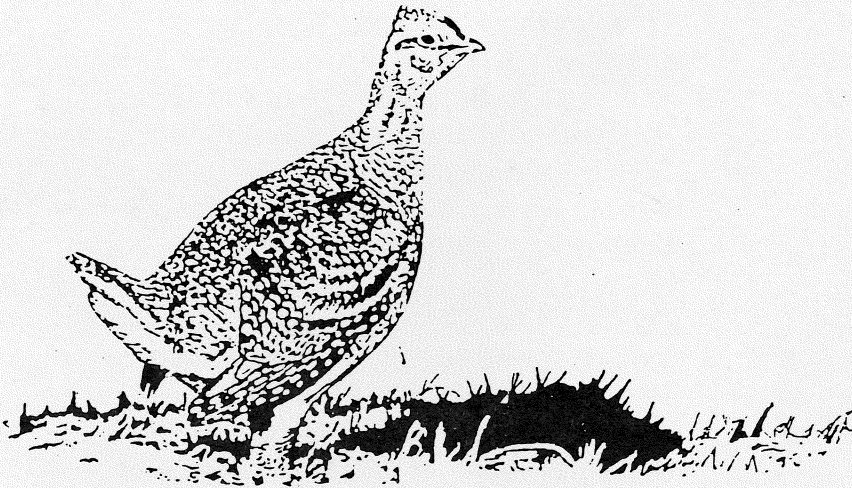


WISCONSIN SHARP-TAILED GROUSE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Volume 18

Winter, 1997

1997 Hunting Season

On January 22nd, the Natural Resources Board approved the administrative code that will set up the procedure for sharptail hunting in 1997 and into the future. WSGS President, Ed Frank and Legislative Liaison, Jim Shurts, testified at the NRB meeting.

Hunting will be by permit only in those areas which have adequate populations to support hunting. An application (\$3.00, or as part of the patron license) will be required and there will be a drawing if units are over-subscribed. Early on the DNR will be very conservative with permits until an average success rate is developed, so probably some units will be over-subscribed.

WSGS had lobbied for not having the application included as one of the benefits of the patron license. With 40,000 plus patrons if even a small proportion of them check off the sharptail option

they may end up flooding the system. It's fine if the patron holders really want to hunt sharptails, but if they're checking off just because it's available to them, they will, in effect, be taking permits from those who would have used them. The Natural Resources Board felt that it was important to maintain consistency on the patron license, and continue to make it as attractive and as simple to use as possible. They did make this decision a matter of policy rather than part of the administrative code, so if serious problems develop this issue could more easily be re-opened.

Overall, WSGS has to be proud to have gotten this legislation and administrative rule developed and passed. When you think about the millions of people that are affected by some legislative action, it's obvious that this is a small potatoes issue. Yet it was important to us, and we got it through. Representative government works!

THIRD ANNUAL ART RAFFLE

Again this year we have assembled a great series of limited wildlife art prints. All prints are double or triple matted and framed. First prize is a whitetailed deer print, Challenger by Buzz Balzer. It depicts two bucks and a doe in a scene which could be almost anywhere in Wisconsin. Buzz, who is a WSGS member from Cashton has remarked this print with a sharptail remarque and personal message.

Second prize is Spring Dance at Crex, by Louis Raymer. There are very few sharptail prints out there and this is one of the best.

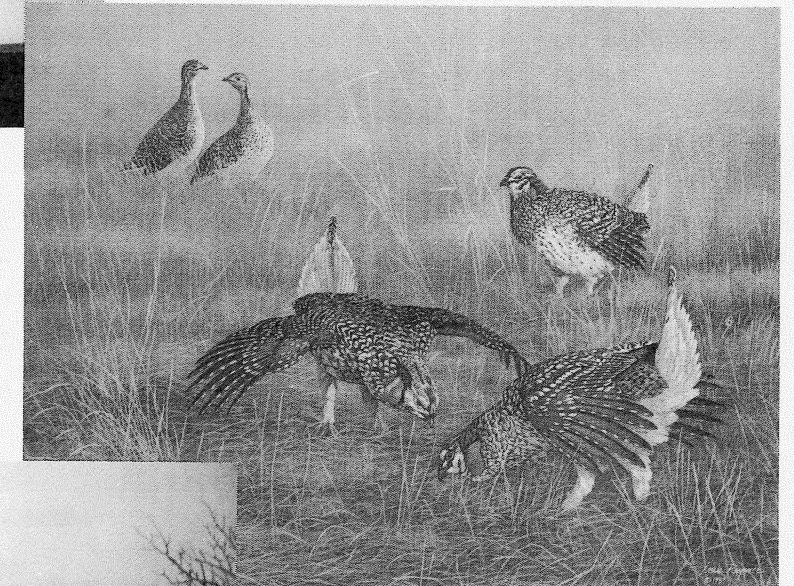
Third prize is entitled Great Possessions by Jonathon Wilde. As you may remember Jonathon so kindly donated the Sharptails at Riley Lake, original last year. Great Possessions is a limited print issued on the 100th anniversary of Aldo Leopold's birth and depicts the famous shack in Sand County. It is signed by the artist and countersigned by Nina Leopold Bradley, Aldo Leopold's daughter.

Fourth prize is Dancing Male, a sharptail portrait by Karen Smith. Our thanks go to Buzz, the Friends of Crex, the Wisconsin Chapter of the Wildlife Society, and the Minnesota Sharptail Grouse Society for donating or making these prints available.

Ticket Prices - Raffle ticket prices are: 1 ticket for \$5.00, 3 tickets for \$10.00, or 10 tickets for \$25.00. Please legibly write your name and the name of the ticket purchaser, if different, on each of the stubs sold. If you cannot attend the meeting, please send the tickets and payment to Bob Dreis, 632 Smith St., Spooner, WI 54801. Those who attend can bring stubs and money to the spring meeting. You need not be present to win. If you're a good sales person and need more tickets contact Dave Evenson, Box 1115, Cumberland, WI 54829 or Bob Dreis. Buy a bunch, it's for a good cause!



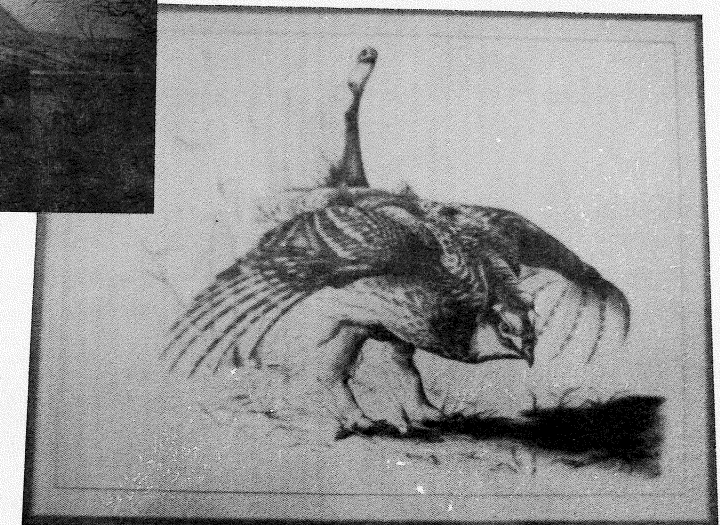
**Challenger
by Buzz Balzer**



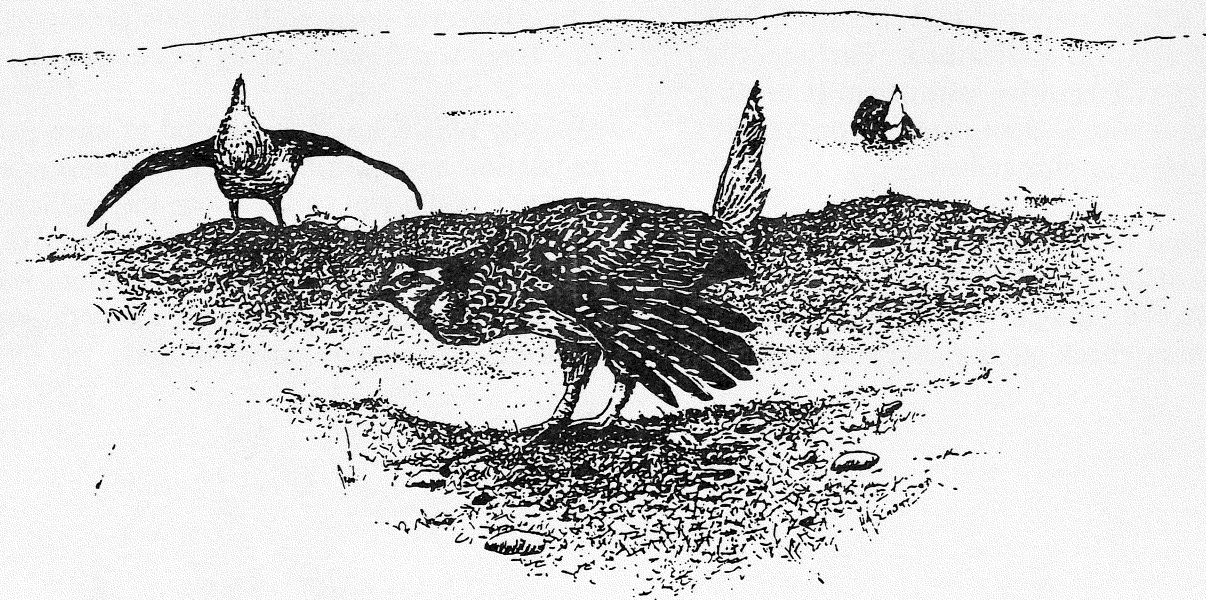
**Spring Dance at Crex
by Louis Raymer**



**Great Possessions
by Jonathon Wilde**



**Sharptail Cock
by Karen Smith**



LICENSE FEE INCREASE NEEDED

By Dave Evenson, Wisconsin DNR

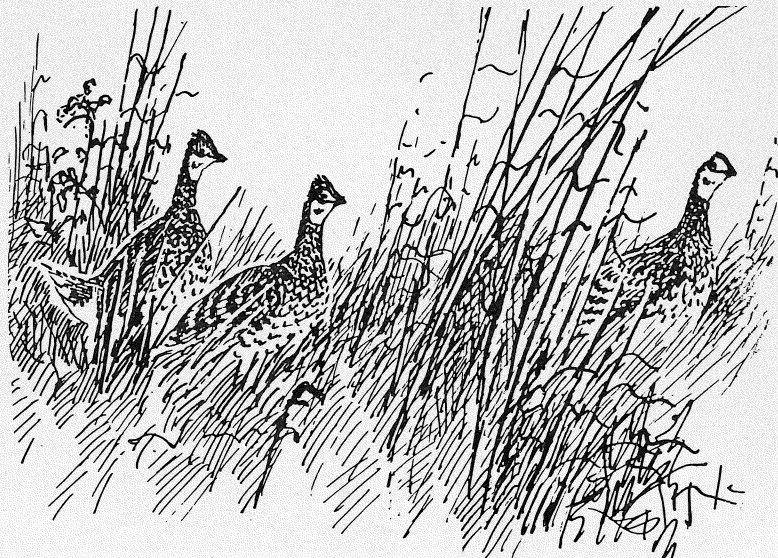
It may seem not to be in your own self interest to push for a hunting and fishing license increase. I hope to convince you that it is. Wisconsin's strong and active wildlife programs are too important to let fall.

Perhaps it seems to you that hunting and fishing license costs go up every year. In fact, it has been six years since the last fee hike. Inflation goes on in the DNR just like it does elsewhere. The cost of vehicles, gasoline, phones, paper, wages, and just about everything else has increased for the wildlife, warden and fishery staff that use your hunting license fees.

Because of these rising costs the amount that we can really put on the land falls. Let me give you a local example. In the four county Cumberland Area, which includes the Namekagon Barrens and Crex Meadows, our local budget was \$98,591 two years ago. This year it is \$64,500 or 35 per cent down. We have vacancies on the Crex Meadows crew and at the Namekagon Barrens Manager, and will have another vacancy due to retirement at Crex this spring.

None of these positions will be filled until the fish and wildlife account looks greener. We are not able to do the surveys, to take care of the properties, plant crops, or maintain forest openings to the extent we should. Because brush prairie remains a high priority at Crex, Fish Lake, and Namekagon Barrens we sure try to keep up with out maintenance and so far have done pretty well. With those three positions missing it will be a challenge to prescribe burn this spring, and every year until we do get them filled.

What can you do? Contact your state assembly person and senator and tell them you favor a modest fee increase on hunting and fishing licenses. Do it today, while you're thinking about it. Hunter and anglers have a long tradition of asking for taxes or fees to support work they believe in, going back to the early days of Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson bills for excise taxes on sporting equipment. We should do no less at this time. Do it now. Thank you.



SENATOR	PHONE	ROOM
(28)ADELMAN, Lynn	608-26-65400	202(M)
(22)ANDREA, Joseph	7-8979	422(M)
(12)BRESKE, Roger	6-2509	9E(C)
(18)BUETTNER, Carol	6-5300	304(M)
(3)BURKE, Brian	6-8535	302(H)
(16)CHVALA, Charles	6-9170	101(M)
(10)CLAUSING, Alice	6-7745	308(H)
(2)COWLES, Robert	6-0484	305(M)
(8)DARLING, Alberta	6-5830	516(M)
(29)DECKER, Russell	6-2502	408(H)
(30)DRZEWIECKI, Gary	6-5670	LL3(M)
(19)ELLIS, Michael	6-0718	201(M)
(33)FARROW, Margaret	6-9174	203(E)
(13)FITZGERALD, Scott	6-5660	518(M)
(6)GEORGE, Gary	6-2500	11E(C)
(7)GROBSCHMIDT, Richard	6-7505	404(H)

(11)HUELSMAN, Joanne	6-2635	510(M)
(25)JAUCH, Robert	6-3510	303(H)
(1)LASEE, Alan	6-3512	303(M)
(31)MOEN, Rodney	6-8546	403(H)
(4)MOORE, Gwendolynne	6-5810	321NE(C)
(20)PANZER, Mary	6-7513	302(M)
(21)PLACHE, Kimberly	6-1832	305(H)
(9)POTTER, Calvin	6-2056	407(H)
(26)RISSER, Fred	6-1627	102(M)
(5)ROSENZWEIG, Peggy	6-2512	202(E)
(32)RUDE, Brian	6-5490	301(M)
(17)SCHULTZ, Dale	6-0703	514(M)
(24)SHIBILSKI, Kevin	6-3123	402(H)
(15)WEEDEN, Timothy	6-2253	LL1(M)
(14)WELCH, Robert	6-0751	201(E)
(27)WINEKE, Joseph	6-6670	304(H)
(23)ZIEN, David	6-7511	511(M)

REPRESENTATIVE	DIST.	ROOM	PHONE	REPRESENTATIVE	DIST.	ROOM	PHONE
AINSWORTH, John (R-6)		4-W	6-3097	LAZICH, Mary (R-84)		307-N	7-5158
ALBERS, Sheryl (R-50)		127-W	6-8531	LEHMAN, Michael (R-58)		103-W	7-2367
BALDUS, Al (D-29)		118-N	6-7683	LINTON, Barbara (D-74)		212-N	6-7690
BALDWIN, Tammy (D-78)		412-N	6-8570	LORGE, William (R-40)		302-N	6-3794
BAUMGART, James (D-26)		3-N	6-0656	MEYER, Mark (D-95)		418-N	6-5780
VACANCY (DISTRICT 15)			6-0620	MORRIS-TATUM, Johnnie (D-11)		306-W	6-3756
BLACK, Spencer (D-77)		219-N	6-7521	MURAT, William (D-71)		9-N	7-9649
BOCK, Peter (D-7)		208-N	6-8580	MUSSER, Terry (R-92)		11-W	6-7461
BOYLE, Frank (D-73)		221-N	6-0640	NASS, Stephen (R-31)		12-W	6-5715
BRANCEL, Ben (R-42)		LL2-MLK	6-7746	NOTESTEIN, Barbara (D-19)		218-N	6-0650
BRANDEMUEHL, David (R-49)		317-N	6-1170	OLSEN, Luther (R-41)		9-W	6-8077
CARPENTER, Timothy (D-9)		210-N	6-1707	OTT, Alvin (R-3)		318-N	6-5831
COGGS, G. Spencer (D-17)		214-N	6-5580	OTTE, Clifford (R-27)		109-W	6-8530
COLEMAN, Charles (R-43)		310-N	6-9650	OURADA, Thomas (R-35)		129-W	6-7694
CULLEN, David (D-13)		5-N	7-9836	OWENS, Carol (R-53)		105-W	7-7990
DOBYNS, John (R-52)		10-W	6-3156	VACANCY (DISTRICT 62)			6-0634
DUEHOLM, Robert (D-28)		323-W	7-2365	PLALE, Jeffrey (D-21)		220-N	6-0610
DUFF, Marc (R-98)		306-N	6-1190	PLOMBON, David (D-68)		409-N	6-9172
FOTI, Steven (R-38)		113-W	6-8551	PORTER, Cloyd (R-66)		309-N	6-2530
FREESE, Stephen (R-51)		115-W	6-7502	POTTER, Rosemary (D-20)		8-N	6-8588
GARD, John (R-89)		316-N	6-2343	POWERS, Michael (R-80)		19-N	6-1192
GOETSCH, Robert (R-39)		314-N	6-2540	PROSSER, David (R-57)		211-W	6-3387
GREEN, Mark (R-4)		115-W	6-5840	REYNOLDS, Martin (D-87)		126-N	6-7506
GRONEMUS, Barbara (D-91)		112-N	6-7015	RILEY, Antonio (D-18)		307-W	6-0645
GROTHMAN, Glenn (R-59)		125-W	4-8486	ROBSON, Judy (D-45)		124-N	6-9967
GUNDERSON, Scott (R-83)		7-W	6-3363	RUTKOWSKI, James (D-82)		216-N	6-8590
HAHN, Eugene (R-47)		15-W	6-3404	RYBA, John (D-90)		322-W	6-0616
HANDRICK, Joseph (R-34)		21-N	6-7141	SCHNEIDER, Marlin (D-72)		204-N	6-0215
HANSON, Doris (D-48)		304-W	6-5342	SCHNEIDERS, Lolita (R-24)		315-N	6-3796
HARSDORF, Sheila (R-30)		15-N	6-1526	SERATTI, Lorraine (R-36)		18-N	6-3780
HASENOHRL, Donald (D-70)		114-N	6-8366	SILBAUGH, Rudy (R-46)		123-W	6-7678
HOVEN, Timothy (R-60)		17-N	7-2369	SKINDRUD, Richard (R-79)		18-W	6-3520
HUBER, Gregory (D-85)		6-N	6-0654	SPRINGER, Thomas (D-86)		107-N	6-1182
HUBLER, Mary (D-75)		7-N	6-2519	TRAVIS, David (D-81)		223-N	6-5340
HUEBSCH, Michael (R-94)		20-N	6-0631	TURNER, Robert (D-61)		109-N	6-0731
HUTCHISON, David (R-1)		21-N	6-5350	UNDERHEIM, Gregg (R-54)		11-N	6-2254
JENSEN, Scott (R-32)		216-W	6-2401	URBAN, Frank (R-99)		13-W	6-9175
JOHNSRUD, DuWayne (R-96)		323-N	6-3534	VANDER LOOP, William (D-5)		122-N	6-2418
KAUFERT, Dean (R-55)		22-W	6-5719	VRAKAS, Daniel (R-33)		312-N	6-3007
KELSO, Carol (R-88)		8-W	6-0485	WALKER, Scott (R-14)		308-N	6-9180
KLUSMAN, Judith (R-56)		119-W	6-7500	WARD, David (R-37)		304-N	6-3790
KREIBICH, Robin (R-93)		107-W	6-0660	WASSERMAN, Sheldon (D-22)		111-N	6-7671
KREUSER, James (D-64)		420-N	6-5504	WILDER, Michael (D-67)		303-W	6-1194
KRUG, Shirley (D-12)		209-N	6-5813	WILLIAMS, Annette (D-10)		17-E	6-0960
KRUSICK, Margaret (D-97)		128-N	6-1733	WIRCH, Robert (D-65)		320-W	6-0455
KUNICKI, Walter (D-8)		201-W	7-7669	WOOD, Wayne (D-44)		104-N	6-7503
LADWIG, Bonnie (R-63)		16-W	6-9171	YOUNG, Leon (D-16)		120-N	6-3786
LA FAVE, John (D-23)		321-W	6-0486	YOUNG, Rebecca (D-76)		119-N	6-3784
LASEE, Frank (R-2)		602-SF	6-9870	ZIEGELBAUER, Robert (D-25)		207-N	6-0315
				ZUKOWSKI, Robert (R-69)		17-W	7-0220

3. SEND A LETTER TODAY TO:

YOUR SENATOR
ROOM NUMBER
P.O. BOX 7882
MADISON, WI 53707-7882

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE
ROOM NUMBER
P.O. BOX 8952 (for last names A-L)
P.O. BOX 8953 (for last names M-Z)
MADISON, WI 53708

DOES HUNTING INCREASE SHARPTAIL POPULATIONS?

By Jim Evrard

Larry Gregg raised a puzzling questions in his sharptail status article in the past newsletter. Why have sharptail populations recently increased on hunted properties (Crex Meadows, Namekagon Barrens, and Riley Lake) while sharptails have declined on unhunted properties (Douglas County, Kimberly-Clark, Moquah Barrens, Pershing, Wood County, and Dike Seventeen)?

A hypothetical but possible reason was discussed recently by Moss, Watson, and Parr in their interesting paper, Experimental Prevention of a Population Cycle in Red Grouse, published this year in the journal, *Ecology* 77 (5): 1512-1530.

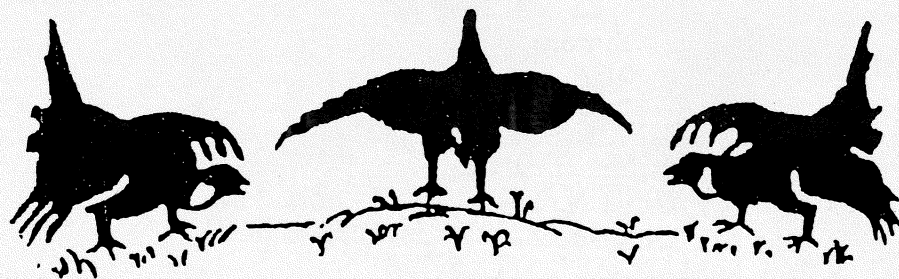
Male or cock red grouse, like sharp-tailed grouse, have breeding territories and red grouse, like the sharp-tailed grouse, have a 10-11 year cycle.

In an area with no sport hunting, enough territorial red grouse cocks were removed in the spring for 5 successive years during the increase phase of the cycle to keep the population from reaching peak densities. The removal of the cocks was followed by the disappearance of a similar number of hens. The red grouse population remained stable and did not suffer a cyclic decline compared to a nearby area with no sport hunting and where cocks were not removed.

The lack of a cyclic decline in the area where cocks were removed experimentally was attributed to a change in the age structure of the red grouse population. When the older cocks (and hens) were removed, recruitment increased (increased numbers of younger and apparently more productive grouse entered the population).

Sport hunting in the fall cannot be directly comparable to experimental removal of birds in the spring. However, sport hunting, no doubt, removes some of the older birds that would be breeding the following spring. It may be that the younger breeding birds in a hunted population produce a greater number of young that are added to the population compared to older breeding birds in an unhunted population. These are the same density-dependent effects that some of us learned in the classroom many years ago.

If this now-proven hypothesis for red grouse is valid for sharp-tailed grouse and given the habitat and hunting conditions of the past several years, we may be reducing or preventing sharptail populations from increasing by protecting them rather than hunting them. This is an interesting but seemingly contradicting concept; increasing sharptail numbers by hunting them!



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WISCONSIN SHARP-TAILED GROUSE SOCIETY

Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27, 1997
St. Croix Inn, Solon Springs, Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Sharp-tailed Grouse Society invites you to their annual meeting. Those who attend the meeting will have the opportunity to census the thriving population of sharp-tailed grouse in Burnett, Douglas and Bayfield counties. Teams of sharptail enthusiasts will be assigned to specific areas to count male sharptails on their dancing grounds in the early morning hours. For the first time, these counts will be used to regulate the sharptail hunting harvest in that area. A special feature of the event will be a steak dinner served in the historic log field trial building on the Douglas County Wildlife Area. The dinner speaker will be Bill Berg of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

AGENDA

- April 26 - 1:00 p.m. Annual Meeting - W.S.G.S. - St. Croix Inn
5:00 p.m. Social hour and dinner - Douglas County WA
7:00 p.m. Sharptail Census Briefing and Assignments
April 27 - 5:00 a.m. Sharptail Census
9:30 a.m. Census Debriefing Brunch - St. Croix Inn

Registration Deadline is April 11, 1997. The registration fee of \$20 includes the hardwood coal-broiled steak dinner and refreshments on Saturday evening, a brunch on Sunday, and registration materials. Payment must be made by the registration deadline. A detachable registration form is attached.

Room reservations must be made directly with the St. Croix Inn (\$40 per night, double). To reserve your accommodations, call the Inn at (715)378-4444 and indicate you will be attending the Wisconsin Sharp-tailed Grouse meeting.

For more information, contact Jim Evrard (715)463-2893.

(cut on dotted line)
REGISTRATION - W.S.G.S. ANNUAL MEETING
Name: _____ Affiliation: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Daytime Phone: (____) ____-____

Make check/money order (\$20) payable to: Wisconsin Sharp-tailed Grouse Society

Send form and payment to: Jim Evrard, W.S.G.S.
Box 367
Grantsburg, WI 54840

**PLEASE CHECK THE DATE ON YOUR MAILING LABEL BELOW TO
DETERMINE IF YOU ARE PAID UP**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL
(1997 Annual Dues \$10.00)**

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____
Zip: _____
Phone: _____

Volunteer Activities

_____ Board of Directors
_____ Newsletter Writing
_____ Bird census work
_____ Publicity
_____ Education
_____ Fund Raising
_____ Other

Enclosed: \$ _____ dues

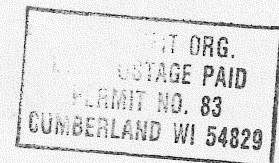
(Regular - \$10) (Supporting \$25)
(Contributing \$50) (Sustaining \$100)
(Sponsor \$200)
Dues are fully tax-deductible

Yes! Please send me: _____ Deluxe corduroy dress cap (\$14.00 postage incl.)
_____ WSGS Logo Window Sticker (\$1.50 postage incl.)
_____ Total Amount Enclosed

Thank you for your continued support,
Board of Directors

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

WSGS
Box 1115
Cumberland, WI 54829



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