

# Professional Guide



The Official Newsletter of the Maine Professional Guides Association

June 2007 • PO Box 336 • Augusta, Maine 04332 • [www.maine-guides.org](http://www.maine-guides.org) • Email: [info@maine-guides.org](mailto:info@maine-guides.org)

## President's Message

Rick Hill, President

It has been several weeks now since our Annual Banquet, and a lot has happened. So much so, that my report will be split into two articles. The first, below, is about our plans and goals for MPGA's future. The second, beginning on page 3, is about our Annual Banquet Meeting and other news.

### "Proactive" – MPGA's New Strategy

We heard a brief presentation at the Banquet from member Art Wheaton, a Grand Lake Stream guide and former special advisor to the president of Remington Arms. Art talked about the need to be more politically proactive in the press, public, and legislative arenas.

I took the Banquet opportunity to update the attendees on MPGA's direction toward elevating us to that next level, namely, positioning our Association to support a professional Executive Director to coordinate Association activities throughout the year, and to be a more effective voice in what is now becoming a full time task.



MPGA at the National Shooting Sports Foundation. See Page 2  
Left to right – John Rust, Doug Painter (NSSF President), Dale Goodman, Wayne Bosowicz, Rick Hill.

Historically, we as an Association have been a part time, volunteer, organization. Our purpose was to be legislatively active in defending the way we all choose to make our living as responsible, consumptive users of our renewable resources.

Lest we not forget, it is the people in our business and industry, and the guests we attract, that pick up the tab for sound wildlife resource management. Without our dollars, Maine would not enjoy the benefits it now has.

Over the years we have done a credible job fighting off adverse legislation, educating legislators and policy makers, and preserving the traditional hunting, fishing and guiding heritage that Maine is so famous for and proud of.

### However, times and foes are changing!

This is no longer a four month a year legislative challenge. It is now YEAR ROUND! And to survive, MPGA must become a year round force!

The issues that affect us are constantly emerging from all directions. The adversaries we face never go away. They re-surface constantly, and the battles get more and more intense with each passing day.

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### MPGA Officers

Chairman:	Don Dudley, Patten	446-6170
President:	Rick Hill, Mt. Chase	528-2183
Vice Pres:	John Rust, Hampden	337-5858
Secretary:	Bert Goodman, Patten	528-2320
Treasurer:	Bob Parker, Wilton	778-4077

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It is a slow process, but the Board’s Restructuring Committee has been working diligently to put the pieces together that will bring our Association to the level of greater effectiveness. It is a work in progress, but we are making significant headway, including plans to increase our annual operating income by over \$100,000.

### **MPGA Partners with the National Shooting Sports Foundation**

Our most recent shot in the arm came from a meeting with the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) in Connecticut.

The NSSF is a \$30 million a year organization with a staff of 47 whose sole purpose is to educate and promote the activities we all enjoy.

They represent over 3,000 manufacturers and retailers of firearms, hunting and fishing equipment, apparel, and other outdoor related products that represent billions of dollars to the national economy. This industry is huge and thanks to the efforts of the NSSF, growing again in many states.

Director Wayne Bosowicz, past Chairman Dale Goodman, Vice President John Rust and I took two days and traveled south to meet their president, Doug Painter, and his staff.

Art Wheaton had set up the meeting for us, and I can truthfully say it was the best thing that could have happened for us. We were greeted with open arms and the discussions were very positive and helpful.

Our mission was to discuss our plans for MPGA and for Maine, to learn from these professionals how best to accomplish our goal to protect our heritage and future, and to build a strong relationship with a major national outdoor powerhouse.

John Rust gave a very comprehensive overview of our Association’s beginnings and accomplishments to date, and they were very impressed with just how far we have come, the status we have achieved and the alliances we have developed in our fight against those who do not share our philosophies.

### **NSSF Donates \$10,000**

The biggest surprise however, was the NSSF’s donation of \$10,000 to MPGA, with a strong potential for yearly contributions of at least that much, and possibly more, as we move forward.

This donation was totally unexpected by any of us! It will be a big help in moving us toward our goals.

We now have some big bore guns on our side, and we look forward to a long and productive relationship collaborating with these folks.

### **More Donations**

The NSSF’s donation is a good start, but we still need financial support from all of us to keep the momentum going and our efforts strong.

The Grand Lake Stream Guides Association helped to launch this effort by donating \$1,000 at MPGA’s Annual Banquet in April.

The Grand Lake area is a bastion of guides and guiding tradition. This group immediately grasped the importance of what MPGA is striving to do, and without hesitation came forth with a donation and challenge for other guides. Our thanks to all the Grand Lake Guides.

Shortly after the Grand Lake Guides’ announcement, others began to jump on board to support MPGA.

V. Paul Reynolds did an excellent job of summarizing our Annual meeting in the May issue of the Northwoods Sporting Journal.

But at the Banquet, Paul and Vic Morin were so moved by our new goals that they got right up in front of the crowd and

offered a free year’s subscription to the Journal to the first 100 persons who contribute at least \$100 to MPGA’s new “Maine Guides Education Fund” (more on page 15).

### **MPGA Supporters, We Thank You**

To those of you who pledged financial support at the banquet, we thank you for taking the high ground and sharing in our vision.

Now there is much more work to do. For those who have not as yet considered, look at the big picture.

Do you want to be here tomorrow? Do you want to help pave the way for your kids’ tomorrows? NOW is the time to get on board!

**Can  
MPGA Raise  
\$100,000 More  
Each Year?  
*Definitely!***

***Be a Winner!***  
**Win a Special MPGA  
Commemorative Marlin 45/70  
“Guides Model” Rifle**  
**Find out how on Page 4**

# President's Report

Rick Hill, President

## 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting & Banquet

For those of you who were not able to attend, you missed perhaps the best and most profitable event we have had since we started hosting our annual banquet. We sold out the house and far exceeded last year's banquet and auction proceeds.

The auction had many great items thanks to many generous members and supporters. Our auctioneer, Roger Lambert, did his usual superb job of getting the money in an entertaining fashion, and everyone had a great time!

Election of Directors was held and voted in by the group. The Nominating Committee recommended the current slate of Directors for re-election, with the only change being Don Helstrom retiring from the Board of Directors.

The Board has also appointed Paul Laney of Grand Lake Stream area to the one open seat, and re-elected the current Chairman and Officers as recommended by the Nominating Committee.

Wayne Bosowicz was recognized for his long dedicated service to the Association. Wayne was a founder in 1979, and has continued to support the MPGA ever since.

Robert Parker was also recognized for his outstanding service to the Association. In addition to working tirelessly as our Treasurer, Bob has always been our top Super Raffle ticket seller. For those of you who think it's too hard to sell the Raffle tickets, talk to Bob – he says it is so easy!

And as usual, Jeff Bellmore and his family team did a bang up job of coordinating everything, and it all went off without a hitch. GREAT JOB EVERYONE!

## Guides Support USSA

Over the last ten years the United States Sportsman Alliance (USSA) has brought national support and awareness to Maine sportsmen's fight to preserve our hunting heritage.

In 2004, their expertise and financial contacts were made available to defend bear hunting. Their help played an important role in allowing Maine sportsmen to win that referendum.

Now in 2007, the USSA is again at our side fighting a lawsuit to stop all trapping brought on by the Animal Protection Institute (API) from California.

The Grand Lake Stream Guides Association so valued the USSA's efforts on Maine's behalf that they brought \$1,000 to MPGA's Banquet to be sent on to the USSA.

The Grand Lake Guides' leadership was recognized by the MPGA Board, who voted on April 29<sup>th</sup> to match the Grand Lake Guides' donation.

Hence, through MPGA, both guides' organizations have sent a combined \$2,000 donation to support the USSA's efforts to fight the API's lawsuit.

Thanks again to all our friends in the Grand Lake Stream Guides Association.

## Deer Task Force

At our December meeting, I appointed a committee of ten people, headed by Matt Libby, to look into concerns about the deer herd in northern and eastern Maine.

MPGA's Deer Committee held three constructive meetings last winter with past and present IF&W wildlife biologists to address the complex issues of habitat and predation.

Then, at our banquet, IF&W Commissioner Danny Martin gave a brief introduction of the Department's new Deer Task Force, which MPGA Director Matt Libby will chair.

This is a major step for the Department, since northern Maine's deer herd has sorely needed attention for some time now.

We are happy to participate in helping to find potential solutions needed to bring the deer numbers back to where they should be for the future in this part of the state.

Though there are still some frustrations to work through, the Commissioner's new task force should be able to come up with some needed recommendations for saving the deer herd.

Matt Libby has done a great job in pulling all of these issues together and deserves a good deal of recognition. Thanks Matt!

“What happened  
to the deer herd in  
Northern and  
Eastern Maine?”  
The Deer Task Force  
plans to find out.

More on page 10

## Membership Questions?

Contact Bob Parker at 778-4077, send Email to [info@maineguides.org](mailto:info@maineguides.org), or write the Association.

# Win this Rifle

Bert Goodman,  
Super Raffle Committee Chairman



Top ticket sellers will receive this one of a kind Marlin 45/70 Guides Gun with the MPGA logo etched into the stock – See Below

We have made a really exciting change to the Super Raffle this year – a special incentive for selling tickets that you won't be able to resist.

## Super Raffle

We meet our challenges head on through our lobbying and involvement on many fronts. This takes lots of money. *We must raise money to protect our outdoor traditions.*

The Super Raffle is our primary means for raising the money needed to protect our proud guiding and outdoor traditions. All guides and our Association depend on your support and participation.

For those of you who don't know how the Super Raffle works, it is really simple. There are ten categories of outdoor vacation experiences that are donated by our members. You buy tickets, and then choose which categories to enter, based on how many chances you buy. Three chances are \$25 – Seven chances are \$50 – and Fifteen chances are \$100. Everyone who buys tickets is automatically included in a bonus drawing – a \$1,000 LL Bean gift certificate.

**“What a great raffle!”**

## Earn a Marlin Guides' Rifle

We have made a really exciting change to the raffle this year. Every one of you who sells \$1,500 worth of tickets will receive a gorgeous Marlin 45/70 Guides Model Rifle, personalized with the MPGA “Professional Guide” logo on the stock (see photo).

How many of you are going to own this rifle? Think about it. It's easy. All you have to do is sell fifteen \$100 tickets, or thirty \$50 tickets, or sixty \$25 tickets. It's up to you. The Super Raffle prizes are great, and these tickets are really easy to sell.

## Earn a LL Bean Gift Certificate

If you sell only \$1,000 in tickets, you will receive a \$200 LL Bean gift certificate. If you sell at least \$500 in tickets, you will receive a \$100 LL Bean gift certificate. That's five to ten ticket sales – every one of you could easily do that.

## Free Advertising

And, by the way, if you have not already pledged a trip for the Super Raffle, go to the MPGA website and sign up today. It is a win-win deal.

Each member who pledges to donate a trip is listed on our special Super Raffle website. Each trip displays your trip info, and a link to your own website. This free link is worth over \$100 at today's online advertising rates, and will generate many visits to your website. Just ask those who have been listed for our previous raffles.

While you might end up delivering a free trip, it is more likely that winners will pick someone else because you will be only one of many choices a winner may select from. If you are picked, you will very likely gain a new repeat customer for the future, or additional income from those who come along with the winner. If the winner is already one of your customers, you will lock in a loyal current customer.

**“You win – MPGA wins – Guides win”**

## Be a Player

We must raise money if we are going to keep our proud outdoor traditions alive in the great state of Maine. So if you have been a player, continue to be one. If you have not been a player, get involved and be one. Remember, together there is no task that we can't accomplish. We proved it in 2004.

## Super Raffle Info

Prize list, Ticket form, Contest Prize info, Trip Pledge form – Visit our website:

<http://www.maine-guides.org/super-raffle/>

Numbered tickets, Contest info, questions – Contact:

**Bert Goodman**  
P.O. Box 323  
Patten, ME 04765  
(207) 528-2320  
Email: [info@northcountrylodge.com](mailto:info@northcountrylodge.com)

# Legislative Report

Skip Trask, Legislative Liaison

## So You Want To Be A Lobbyist!

Each year when the legislative session comes to an end, I breathe a sigh of relief. Although I enjoy the role I play in the fight to protect the rights and privileges of Maine guides, I'm always pretty "burned out" at the end of the session.

Unless you've been there and done it, I doubt that you can begin to imagine the amount of time and energy it takes to try to keep track of more than a hundred bills that have the potential to impact guides and guiding.

You have to prepare written testimony on many of these bills and submit twenty-five copies of your written testimony to the appropriate committee clerk.

You consistently attend more than a dozen public hearings a week. You spend countless hours sitting through committee work sessions and discussing the pros and cons of various issues with dozens of legislators.

As with most jobs, lobbyists have good days and bad days. As I'm writing this report, the First Regular Session of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Maine Legislature is approaching the statutory adjournment date – June 20<sup>th</sup>.

Everything considered, the MPGA has had a lot more good days than bad days this session.

## Fate of Salt Water Fishing License Still Up In the Air

On April 23<sup>rd</sup> I testified at a public hearing at the Augusta Civic Center on a bill (LD1811) to establish a salt-water fishing license.

The MPGA joined the Charterboat Captains, the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, and a handful of saltwater anglers to oppose this poorly written legislation.

For something as controversial as a license to fish in tidal waters, I was surprised at the relatively small number of people in attendance. At the beginning of the public hearing, the public was forced to listen for more than an hour as the Commissioner of Marine Resources, George LaPointe, expounded on the need for a saltwater fishing license and the many benefits that would accompany the additional five million dollars in user fees that his department would collect.

Those of us objecting to the bill accomplished what we intended, however. The Committee quickly scuttled the original bill in favor of a resolve requiring that the Commissioner of Marine Resources:

"Develop and determine how to implement a saltwater recreational fishing license, permit or registry for the coastal waters of the State that will exempt saltwater recreational anglers and charter boat fishing vessels from registering under the federal registration program established in the reauthorized federal Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act".

The Commissioner would then be required to report to the Committee next January with his recommendations. Although this resolve was endorsed by a majority of

the Committee (10 to 2) and was enacted in the House, it ran into trouble in the Senate with a motion to table indefinitely.

At the time I completed this report, the fate of the resolve was still in limbo. Unless the Senate changes its position, and agrees with the action taken by the House, the resolve will die.

Either way, saltwater anglers will continue to "fish for free" – at least for a while longer.

The MPGA wishes to thank the Maine Association of Charterboat Captains for the important role they played in opposing LD1811.

## MPGA Joins With MTHA to Defeat Bill Detrimental To Dog Owners

What most of us remember about Mr. Robert Fisk, Director of Maine Friends of Animals, is the role he played in trying to destroy the Maine bear hunt in 2004.

What many of you may not know is that most of Mr. Fisk's efforts, as the director of his Falmouth based animal rights organization, are directed toward domestic animals, especially dogs.

We all know of situations where dogs have been badly mistreated and applaud the efforts of those who try to prevent those abuses. Every year there are numerous bills considered by the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee that are designed to help deal with those types of problems.

Most of the bills are well intentioned. Some, however, are completely unnecessary and unreasonable.

Case in point was a Bob Fisk bill entitled "An Act to Protect Dogs Tied Outside" (LD1185). The title sounds innocent enough, and the bill had already received a favorable public hearing before I became aware of it.

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Overall, MPGA  
had a Lot of  
Good Days this  
Session

Among other things, this bill would:

- Require that all dogs tied outside be turned loose for three hours each day. [It wouldn't have mattered if the dog's chain was already attached to a hundred-foot run, or if the dog was already receiving a tremendous amount of off-leash exercise as the result of training and hunting activities.]
- Prohibit a person from tying a dog outside during periods of extremely cold weather or extremely hot weather or at any time there was a severe weather warning in effect for that area. [It wouldn't have mattered if the person owned twenty or more dogs or if the animals were already provided with dog houses suitable for bad weather conditions.]

In a nutshell, LD1185 would create an unworkable situation for many guides that own hunting dogs.

I immediately contacted Norm Sanderson, President of the Maine Treehound Association, and we made plans to attend the committee work session on this outrageous piece of legislation.

Knowing that it's usually difficult to get a chance to speak at a work session, I prepared a one-page memo to the ACF Committee spelling out all the problems with the bill and made arrangements for the Committee Clerk to provide each Committee member with a copy at the appropriate time.

Norm Sanderson also got a chance to say a few words to the Committee.

Several Committee members quoted lines from my memo, and Mr. Fisk was allowed to say a few words in rebuttal – he stated that he'd already worked out an exception with the sled dog people but had never considered that the owners of hunting dogs might be adversely affected by his bill. He then promised to sit down with us and work out language to also exclude hunting dogs.

By then, however, the Committee had heard enough, and they voted unanimously “ought not to pass”, killing the bill. A good day for the MPGA!

### **Fall Firearm Season on Turkeys Coming This Year!**

Senator John Nutting of Leeds, who is also a dairy farmer, submitted a bill (LD379) requiring the IF&W Department to establish a fall turkey season for firearm hunters. The Department opposed the bill, and the bill died in Committee.

After the bill was dead, Senator Nutting and other legislators who had supported the bill complained to the Department about the many problems that turkeys are causing for farmers in some areas.

Apparently their strategy worked, because within a few days the Department was circulating a proposal for a shotgun season on turkeys this fall in Wildlife Districts 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25.

The six-day season would start on the Saturday prior to Youth Deer Hunting Day. Each permit holder would be allowed one turkey of either sex. Turkeys could be taken only with shotguns (gauges 10 through 20) using shot size 4 through 6, and the use of dogs would be allowed. Hunting hours would be ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset.

Although this proposal must survive the rule-making process, including a vote of approval by the Fish and Wildlife Advisory Council, I believe it's a done deal!

Also, as the turkey population continues to grow, I believe we'll see more WMDs opened up to fall shotgun hunting for turkeys in the future.

<p style="text-align: center;">Guides Again Use Knowledge and Common Sense to Defeat Needless Animal Rights Legislation</p>
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### **Alien Hunters May Be Required to Employ A Maine Guide**

A bill requiring alien nonresident hunters to employ Maine guides when hunting deer, bear and moose stands a good chance of becoming law this session.

The bill (LD98) was submitted by Representative Charles Theriault of Madawaska. MPGA has opposed similar legislation in the past, primarily because of IF&W's projections that such a requirement would cause a significant drop in license sales.

MPGA initially opposed LD98 this year, but we withdrew our opposition after the Department testified “neither for nor against” the bill and indicated that the number of licenses sold to nonresident aliens has declined to a fairly insignificant number.

After that, the bill was enacted in both the House and Senate. However, the bill has a negative fiscal note of about \$40,000.00.

It is now lying on the appropriations table, and it is entirely up to the Appropriations Committee to decide if the Department can afford to absorb the potential loss in revenue. If they decide against it, the bill dies.

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### Department Petitioned To Shorten Grouse Season

The F&W Department has received petitions from members of the public requesting that the grouse (partridge) hunting season be shortened one month by eliminating the month of December.

In response, the Department has already held one public hearing in Washington County to solicit public input and has scheduled another public hearing for June 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM, at the Presque Isle Fish and Game Club in Presque Isle.

The Department will also accept written comments regarding this proposal until July 30<sup>th</sup>.

The MPGA opposes the shortening of the grouse season on the grounds that there is no biological justification to do so, and that a shortened season would adversely impact guides.

I will be submitting testimony to the Department prior to the comment deadline expressing our strong opposition.

### Bear Trapping Bill Dies Following Contentious Debate

Many of you drove to the Augusta Civic Center on May 8<sup>th</sup> to attend the public hearing on LD #1635, “An Act to Prohibit Recreational Bear Trapping”. Thank you for being there!

Some of you testified and did an outstanding job. I know that the Committee was impressed by the fact that we outnumbered supporters of the bill by at least 5 to 1.

What impressed them most, however, was the demeanor of the more than 200 trappers, guides and hunters who filled the hearing room.

In spite of the insults and untruths about our lifestyle and the forms of outdoor recreation we enjoy, everyone conducted themselves as ladies and gentlemen. I was proud of you!

I believe we left the clear impression that we hold to a higher standard than the animal rights fanatics who are continually trying to destroy our way of life.

### Deceitful Wammers

The Wildlife Alliance of Maine (WAM) wanted the Committee to believe that LD #1635 was only about bear trapping. Daryl DeJoy, their executive director, actually made that statement several times during his testimony.

What followed, of course, was that just about everyone else who testified in support of the bill couldn't resist “taking a crack” at bear baiting, or hunting with dogs, or trapping in general, or hunting in general, or all killing of wildlife.

In fact, many of those who spoke in support of the bill are the very same people who collected the signatures for the 2004 referendum to ban bear hunting.

Had they been successful in getting LD1635 enacted, WAM would have come back next session with a bill to ban the hunting of bear with dogs.

They may do that anyway, but my guess is that they won't. Their best chance at success was trapping, and they didn't even come close.

### Two “Maines”

LD1635 did not die in Committee, as it should have. Even though there is no legitimate reason to ban bear trapping, Representative Jane Eberle of South Portland supported the bill, and the bill went out of Committee with an 11 to 1 divided report.

This kept the bill alive and gave WAM supporters an opportunity to debate bear trapping in the House of Representatives.

Several legislators who obviously know nothing about trapping stood to speak in support of the bill. Some used the words cruel, inhumane, barbaric and archaic. All were from southern Maine.

None of what they said was even close to being accurate. I'm sure they were just repeating information that had been supplied to them by WAM.

Representative Troy Jackson of Allagash, House Chair of the F&W Committee, stood to speak against the bill three times. He was joined by Representative Mark Bryant of Windham and Representative Joe Tibbetts of Columbia. Each of them did an outstanding job.

Following the debate, the bill was shot down by a vote of 82 to 60. In the Senate, the “ought not to pass” majority report was read and accepted without objection (no actual vote), and the bill was officially dead.

Another good day for the MPGA!

Anti's Rave On,  
and Guides Prove  
They are the  
Voice of  
Knowledge  
and Reason

# MPGA's "Wanton Waste"

## Bill Signed Into Law

By Skip Trask, Legislative Liaison

This year the MPGA Board of Directors decided on a legislative agenda that focused largely on preventing the waste of our wildlife resources.

As a result, I was able to include several changes in one bill, creating a comprehensive "package" that I hoped would be attractive to legislators.

The most controversial section of our bill, LD728, was the bear permit requirement for November deer hunters. That particular section nearly spelled disaster for the entire bill during committee work sessions, but we were eventually able to negotiate a compromise that allowed us to get a unanimous "ought to pass as amended" committee report.

After that, the bill sailed through both the House and Senate and was signed into law by Governor Baldacci on May 27<sup>th</sup>.

The changes are explained below:

### Effective 90 days after the current session adjourns

- It is unlawful for a person to waste a wild bird or wild animal wounded or killed by that person while hunting. "Waste" means to intentionally leave a wounded or killed animal in the field or forest without making a reasonable effort to retrieve and render it for consumption or use. [Except for migratory birds, this is the first time that Maine has had a "wanton waste" law. It is long overdue!]
- Any person licensed to guide hunters may, outside of legal hunting hours, track and dispatch a deer, bear or moose that has been wounded by that guide's client. [This provision replaces the old "bear dispatch permit" that guides have previously been required to obtain from the Department. Although this change won't become effective until at least three weeks into the 2007 bear season, we're hoping that the Department will simply allow this practice during the early part of the season rather than issue dispatch permits.]

### Beginning in 2008

- Nonresidents that don't have a regular bear hunting permit will be required to obtain a "late season bear

permit" to take a bear during the open firearm season on deer. The fee for this new permit is \$40.

- All trappers will be required to have a bear permit in addition to a trapping license before attempting to trap a bear. The permit fees will be the same as for hunters (\$27 for residents and \$67 for nonresidents).
- All money generated by these fees will be placed in a new, non-lapsing, dedicated account (the Black Bear Research Fund) to be used exclusively for studies related to black bear management.

### Passage Of MPGA Legislation Brings Many Positive Benefits To Guides

#### Prevents waste of wildlife resources -

Just about every other state has some type of provision to help ensure the retrieval and proper care of harvested game animals.

The only "wanton waste" provision previously in place in Maine deals with waterfowl hunting and is a requirement of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Until the passage of our bill, a person would not have been violating the law if they wounded a turkey, deer, bear or moose and made absolutely no effort to find the animal.

It is imperative that every hunter understands the responsibility that accompanies him or her when going into the fields and forests with firearm or archery equipment. Respecting and

properly handling the game we harvest is critical to the future of hunting.

Making it a Class E crime to "waste" a harvested animal will serve as a constant reminder to hunters that they have a responsibility to locate and properly field dress every wild bird and wild animal taken.

It will also create a more positive image of hunters in the minds of the non-hunting public by sending the message that Maine's hunting laws prohibit the wasting of harvested game.

#### Ensures quick and humane dispatching of wounded animals -

It's not unusual for a hunter to shoot a bear just before dark and have the bear move out of sight. The hunter, not knowing if the bear is dead or alive, doesn't feel comfortable following the animal into the woods alone, so the hunter waits for his or her guide.

Maine Guides  
Oppose Waste  
Of Wildlife or  
Any Other  
Natural Resource

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Guides, by definition, are employed to assist a person while hunting, have historically tracked these animals for clients – it’s always been considered part of a guide’s job. The Department has for years, condoned this activity, by issuing Dispatch Permits to bear-hunting guides.

Recently, however, a question was raised about the Department’s authority to issue these permits. Our change legalizes this activity for all hunting guides without the need for an additional dispatch permit.

Although bears are the species most often requiring this type of intervention by guides, we felt it made sense to include other big game animals. It will help ensure that wounded animals are dispatched quickly, safely and humanely and that they don’t go to waste.

**Reduces incidental bear kill during deer season -**

Some deer hunters have a genuine interest in taking a bear. That’s fine. Others simply shoot a bear because they are legally allowed to do so - then ask themselves why, because they didn’t really want the animal.

Each year we get reports that some of these animals are left in the woods. The MPGA has no problem with allowing bears to be harvested during the deer-hunting season, but we do have a serious problem with hunters shooting any animal that they really don’t want and then letting the animal go to waste.

That’s why we put a section in our bill requiring a bear permit during the firearm season on deer. We knew that many deer hunters would argue that they’ve always been allowed to take a bear without the need for a permit and that they should be allowed to continue that practice.

We believe, however, that the time has come to start taking conservation measures that will delay the need to go to a lottery system for bear hunting such as we currently have for moose.

Whenever the annual harvest approaches 4,000 bears, the Department starts talking about ways to reduce the kill. The season has already been shortened again and again to the point that further shortening is not practical.

Hunting pressure on our black bear population will continue to increase. Anything we can do now to conserve this valuable resource, without eliminating opportunity for serious bear hunters, we should be doing.

Although we weren’t able to get the November bear permit for resident deer hunters, we did get a late season bear permit for nonresidents beginning in 2008. That’s a

big step toward reducing the waste of our black bear resource during the deer season.

We’re confident that the late season permit will eventually apply to everyone.

**Provides funds to conduct bear research -**

In addition to the late season bear permit for nonresident deer hunters, bear trappers will be required to have a bear permit in addition to a trapping license.

During a recent Department review of Maine’s bear harvesting methods, it became obvious that the Department has little information about bear trapping. They don’t even know how many people trap for bears.

The Department recently adopted a rule to ban the use of foothold traps for bear trapping, even though they didn’t have adequate data to support the change. The

Maine Trappers Association agreed to tolerate the change, even though bear trappers and bear trapping guides would lose the use of thousands of dollars worth of equipment.

Trappers and guides made that decision because it was the right thing to do, both for the future of trapping and to ensure that bears are being trapped in accordance with best management practices.

While no one is enthusiastic about another fee, it has recently become obvious that if Maine is going to continue to allow the trapping of bears, the Department must have more and better information about this activity.

The revenue from bear trapping permits, along with the late season bear hunting permits, will go into a non-lapsing dedicated account to cover the costs of obtaining the information about bear trapping that is currently missing as well as to conduct other bear related research projects.

**Thanks to Legislators Who Helped Get Our Bill Enacted**

MPGA is grateful to Representative Pat Flood of Winthrop for sponsoring LD728 on our behalf.

We also extend our appreciation to Representatives Troy Jackson of Allagash, Tom Saviello of Wilton, and Thom Watson of Bath, and Senator Karl Turner of Cumberland for signing onto our bill as co-sponsors.

Finally, we wish to thank every member of the Fish & Wildlife Committee for their unanimous endorsement of the amended version of this bill – ensuring its enactment.

Tracking and  
Dispatching  
Wounded Big  
Game has always  
been a Maine  
Guide’s Job

# Legislative Committee Considers Bills to Control Coyotes

By Skip Trask, Legislative Liaison

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, the Legislative Fish and Wildlife Committee held public hearings on three bills designed to protect wintering deer in northern and eastern Maine from predation by coyotes.

The bill that received the most attention was a resolve (LD823) sponsored by Representative Herb Clark of Millinocket to “Create an Effective Coyote Control Program”.

The Legislative Fish & Wildlife Committee listened intently to the concerns I raised about the effects of coyote depredation to deer.

Gerry Lavigne, retired Maine deer biologist, represented SAM at the hearing and also provided outstanding testimony.

## Why are Northern & Eastern Maine’s Guides and Sporting Camps Losing Deer Hunters?

### My Testimony On Behalf Of MPGA In Support of LD 823

“Throughout history we have attempted to reduce the numbers of one species of wild animal in order to enhance another species considered to be more beneficial to man.

Even in today’s society, where animal extremists denounce this practice as cruel, unethical and inhumane, most people understand the benefits of predator control, and they support it.

Groups like Maine Audubon sanction the killing of gulls that threaten roseate terns on our coastal islands. They support the trapping of foxes that prey on piping plovers on our coastal beaches. The Department employs people to carry out these predator control activities every year.

The whitetail deer has long been considered Maine’s most important big game animal - important not just to hunters but a critical component to local economies throughout the State.

Although Maine’s deer population is flourishing in much of our state, deer numbers in northern and eastern Maine are probably the lowest they’ve been in the past hundred years. The few pockets of deer that are left are being decimated by coyotes.

At the rate we’re going, deer may soon qualify for listing as a threatened species in some areas. I’d be willing to bet that dozens of townships have more Canada lynx than they do whitetail deer.

I’m not exaggerating! The deer herd is in such bad shape in parts of northern and eastern Maine that some

guides and sporting camps are no longer booking deer hunts.

Some well established sporting camps that remained open for deer hunters this past fall reported that, for the first time in their history, their clients were unsuccessful in harvesting a single deer.

The bear hunt is the only thing keeping some of these businesses going, and if something isn’t done soon to help the deer herd, many of Maine’s hunting lodges may be forced to close their doors for good.

Make no mistake! We fully understand that predation is not the only problem negatively affecting deer in northern and eastern Maine.

Severe winter weather and inadequate wintering habitat resulting from spruce budworm infestations and timber harvesting operations have contributed significantly to the decline in the deer herd in some areas.

However, depredation on deer by coyotes is a primary reason that attempts to stop the decline in the deer herd have been unsuccessful.

We can’t change the weather, and large-scale habitat improvement is a slow process.

We can do something about coyotes. We’ll never stop coyotes from killing deer, but in areas where the deer herd is below acceptable levels, we should be trying to minimize the loss of deer to these predators.

More than twenty years ago, because of extreme concern about the status of the deer herd, the Maine Legislature mandated a coyote control program.

That was during a time, I might add, when the deer situation in northern and eastern was nowhere near as bleak as it is today.

The statutory mandate to control coyotes is still on the books and reads, in part, as follows:

“The commissioner shall maintain a coyote control program. The commissioner may employ qualified persons to serve as agents of the department for purposes of coyote control. These agents must be trained by the department in animal damage control techniques and must be utilized by the department to perform coyote control duties in areas where predation by coyotes is posing a threat to deer.”

That mandate is not being carried out!

Up until four years ago, the Department administered a snaring program where trappers were allowed to use snares during the winter months to remove coyotes from deer wintering areas.

...Continued on Next Page

This program proved successful in some areas and resulted in the removal of as many as 500 coyotes a year.

Unfortunately, the program was suspended in 2003 in response to threats of a lawsuit by an animal protection group based right here in Maine.

While we are optimistic that the use of snares will eventually be restored, we must find other methods to control coyotes in the interim.

Four winters have passed without any effort on the part of the Department to control coyotes in areas where deer are being threatened. We believe that the law requires them to make this effort, and we encourage this Committee to direct the Department to establish population goals for coyotes and develop strategies for reaching those goals.

Imagine how frustrating it must be for sporting camp owners and guides to watch their livelihood going “down the drain” and having the perception that nobody really cares.

This resolve, if enacted, will help convince these folks that the Department and the Legislature understand the current crisis and are serious about trying to fix it.”

**Committee of Jurisdiction Directs Department to Develop A Coyote Control Plan**

During the works sessions on LD823, it became obvious that the Fish and Wildlife Committee was very concerned about the status of the deer herd in northern and eastern Maine and very interested in doing something about it.

They voted unanimously “ought to pass as amended” on the bill, and sent it upstairs where it was easily enacted in both the House and Senate.

The resolve has already been signed into law by Governor Baldacci, and reads, as follows:

**Resolve, To Create an Effective Deer Habitat Enhancement and Coyote Control Program**

(Effective 90 days after legislative adjournment)

**Sec. 1.** Deer habitat enhancement and coyote control program. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall establish a working group to review existing programs and efforts related to creating, enhancing and maintaining critical deer habitat in the State and reducing predation of deer by coyotes. In reviewing the programs and efforts, the working group shall

look for ways to improve and increase wintering habitat for deer and for ways to increase the survivorship of deer on a year-round basis. The working group shall also establish methods of controlling coyote populations and set goals to manage the coyote populations; and be it further

**Sec. 2.** Report. Resolved: That the Commissioner of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall report the working group's findings, recommendations and draft legislation under section 1 to the Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife by December 30, 2007. The Joint Standing Committee on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife may submit legislation related to the report to the Second Regular Session of the 123rd Legislature.

LD 823 directs IF&W to manage the coyote population and to reduce predation of deer by coyotes

**MPGA Deer Committee Prompts Commissioner to Form Deer Task Force**

Concerns about dwindling deer numbers in the northern and eastern portions of the State have generated numerous discussions at MPGA Board meetings for several years.

When it became obvious that little was being done to try to turn the situation around, MPGA formed a deer committee to look into possible solutions. Board member Matt Libby volunteered to chair our deer committee.

The MPGA Deer Committee has taken its work very seriously. Within a relatively short time it generated statewide attention to this very serious problem and led to productive discussions with the Department.

At MPGA’s Annual Banquet in April, Commissioner Dan Martin announced that he would form a northern and eastern Maine deer task force to help develop deer management recommendations for those regions.

The Commissioner made this announcement and started setting up his “Northern and Eastern Deer Task Force” even before the Legislature had enacted the Resolve discussed above.

The Commissioner selected MPGA Board member Matt Libby to serve as chairman of the group. Other members, in addition to Department biologists, are Don Dudley representing the Maine Trappers Association, Brian Smith of the Maine Bowhunters Association,

...Continued on Next Page

Gerry Lavigne of the Sportsman’s Alliance of Maine, Sally Stockwell of Maine Audubon, Pat Strauch of the Maine Forest Products Council, and Tom Doak of Small Woodlot Owners Association of Maine (SWOAM).

The Task Force has already had two meetings and more are planned.

The legislative resolve directing the commissioner to establish a working group to look at the same issues currently being reviewed by the Task Force won’t become effective until mid-September.

As a result, it is unclear whether the Commissioner’s Task Force and the Working Group mandated by the legislature will be one and the same, or if another working group will be formed once the new legislation becomes effective.

To me, it makes sense to use the group already in place to satisfy the legislative mandate. Either way, a lot of attention is being focused on restoring deer populations in areas where they are far below acceptable levels.

That’s a good thing, and it represents yet another example of how hard MPGA is working on behalf of its membership and Maine sportsmen.

all Maine’s public and conservation lands, and the uses allowed on each area, and to then identify solutions to conflicts between competing uses ranging from motorized vehicles to backcountry camping.

The task force will hold a series of meetings (possibly six or more), at least two public hearings, and will report back to the Legislature before the end of the year. Deputy Commissioner Paul Jacques will chair the Task Force.

MPGA Vice President John Rust represents the Association on the Task Force. The group's 16 public members include recreational users, conservation organizations, and landowners. Besides MPGA, the groups represented are: North Maine Woods, Sportsmen's Alliance of Maine, Western Mountains Foundation, Appalachian Mountain Club, University of Maine Dept. of Wildlife Ecology, Forest Society of Maine, The Nature Conservancy, Maine Sportsmen, Katahdin Timberlands Group, Maine Snowmobile Association, ATV Maine, Chewonki Foundation, Maine Audubon Society, Maine Sierra Club, and a small land owner.

In addition, the Task Force includes Department of Conservation Commissioner McGowan, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Deputy Commissioner Jacques, Tim Glidden, the Director of the Land for Maine's Future Program, Representatives Watson, Mearan and Lundeen, and Senators Raye and Bryant.

**Will Guides,  
Hunters &  
Sportsmen Lose  
More Access, or  
Will We Stand Up  
to Protect Our  
Sports?**

## **Task Force to Review Access Issues**

John Rust

Hunters and other traditional recreationists have lost access to thousands of acres during the last several years. And access on thousands more acres is now pending.

Much of this loss is due to private land owners instituting “no hunting” or “no motor vehicle” policies.

Much has also resulted from deals like Katahdin Lake (Department of Conservation and Legislature) and Katahdin Ironworks (Forest Legacy and Land for Maine’s Future grants to the Appalachian Mountain Club), despite being funded with taxpayer money.

### **Public Lands Task Force**

Some is even the result of the Bureau of Parks and Lands’ (BPL) own management decisions.

Feeling the need to address these concerns, Governor Baldacci created a Task Force to develop an inventory of

### **Inventory, Trends & Trade-offs**

The Task Force second meeting is scheduled for July 25<sup>th</sup>. There will be presentations by IF&W, BPL and the Land for Maine’s Future about the lands they own or have interests in (ie., conservation easements), and what uses are allowed on each parcel. The Task Force will then begin discussing the policies and how various uses are accommodated and managed.

While the State agencies work on their land inventories, the public members have been asked to collect any and all studies of recreational trends and economic impacts.

Future discussions will delve into this data and attempt to use these facts to help the State set priorities for future land acquisitions and land use planning.

Recreational users like guides and sportsmen are keenly interested in this discussion, as are major conservation organizations like the Nature Conservancy and the Forest Society of Maine.

## **BPL Land Management Plans Released at Record Pace**

John Rust

Following last fall's elections, the Bureau of Parks & Lands (BPL) charged full speed ahead to finalize and release management plans for each major publicly owned land area. So far, BPL has nearly completed the process, and is now beginning the Kennebec Highlands area.

You should read these plans if you use these areas, or if you are concerned about lost access for hunting and recreation.

**Down East & Seboomook Regions** - Final management plans have been released for the Down East (Machias) and Seboomook Regions. The Bureau of Parks & Lands intends these to be fifteen year plans, much longer than the ten year plans done previously.

**Flagstaff & Northern Aroostook Regions** - The final management plan drafts were released and reviewed on May 8 for the Flagstaff Region and in Ashland on May 11 for the Northern Aroostook Region. The next step is a final sign-off by DOC Commissioner McGowan.

All these plans, their maps and resource allocation maps may be downloaded from the State website (<http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/>), or obtained in printed form directly from BPL.

## **Maine Office of Tourism Begins Promoting Guides**

John Rust

Tourism is Maine's biggest industry, both in jobs and economic impact. A tiny portion of the meals and lodging sales tax is allocated to a Tourism Marketing Fund. That amounts to about \$7 million to spend on promoting Maine's travel opportunities. Some of that is allocated to grants for the seven regional tourism agencies.

### **Inland Regions Promote Guides**

We are making progress on getting more State tourism promotion funds spent on guides and outdoor recreation.

MPGA has participated on the Maine Tourism Commission for many years, and we have recently assisted on several promotional articles involving guides including topics such as survival (Outdoor Life), and fishing (Associated Press Travel), and hiring guides.

This year, two tourism regions have received State grants as a result of this renewed interest in promoting guides – The "Maine Highlands" (Bangor, Greenville, Millinocket), and the "Lakes & Mountains Tourism Council" (Sebago, Bethel, Rangeley, Eustis).

Both these regions understand and value the economic contribution that guides make to their region's economy.

The Maine Highlands will attend two sportsman shows to promote hunting and fishing in that region. The specific shows are not definite yet, but they will probably go to one show in Massachusetts and one in New York.

The Lakes & Mountains region has just launched a PR campaign that promotes employing guides, and really builds on the mystique of Maine Guides. This effort has already resulted in articles published in "The Heart of New England" and the "Travel Smart Newsletter".

**Why are Northern & Eastern**

**Maine's Guides and**

**Sporting Camps Losing**

**Deer Hunters?**

**Help us find out**

**See Page 10**

## MPGA Meetings Coming Up

**July 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Board of Directors meeting, 9:00 AM (open to all members). Holiday Inn on Odlin Road, Bangor.

**September 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Board of Directors meeting, 9:00 AM (open to all members). Holiday Inn on Odlin Road, Bangor.

## ProPlan

Still there. Still a great deal. But when we change from a lengthy magazine format to this rapid response newsletter format, something had to give. And one thing will be the regular listing of ProPlan offerings.

But not to worry! ProPlan info will soon be published in two forms: 1) a webpage will soon be available on the Association website; and 2) full information will be included in our new Professional Guide “Annual” Edition that will be available next January.

Meanwhile, if you have any questions or want to place a LL Bean order, just contact Bob Parker, our ProPlan Coordinator. Contact Bob Parker at 778-4077, or send an email to: [info@maineguides.org](mailto:info@maineguides.org).

## Officers & Directors

If you have a question and need answers, please call one of your Board of Directors or Officers.

- Chairman of the Board - Don Dudley, Patten, 446-6170
- President - Rick Hill, Mt. Chase, 528-2183
- Vice President - John Rust; AWW Committee Chair - Hampden, 207-337-5858
- Treasurer - Bob Parker; ProPlan Coordinator - Wilton, 778-4077
- Secretary - Bert Goodman; Raffle Committee Chair – Patten, 528-2320
- Tom Aasbo – Oxbow, 435-6140
- Jeff Bellmore; Banquet Committee Chair – Warren, 273-3818
- Wayne Bosowicz – Sebec, 564-3404
- Mike Carver; Show Committee Chair – Bingham, 672-5551
- Doug Denico - Fairfield, 453-2963 ext. 13
- Hank Goodman - Patten, 528-2320
- Paul Laney – Grand Lake Stream, 796-5068
- Matt Libby – Ashland, 435-8274
- Steve Norris - Princeton, 557-7463
- Dave Tobey - Grand Lake Stream, 796-2684

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## *Membership Questions?*

Got a question about your membership, dues, or website directory listing? Contact Bob Parker:

Bob Parker  
778-4077  
Email: [info@maineguides.org](mailto:info@maineguides.org)

...or write to the Association:

Maine Professional Guides Association  
PO Box 336  
Augusta, ME 04332-0336

***Be a Winner!***

**Win a Custom MPGA  
Commemorative Marlin 45/70  
“Guides Model” Rifle**

**Find out how on Page 4**

# MPGA Launches the Maine Guides Education Fund

For over one hundred years, Maine guides have been stewards of wildlife and natural resources, and advocates of outdoor recreation traditions. But now those resources and traditions are seriously endangered.

The Maine Guides Education Fund was created in response to concerns about the future of Maine's outdoor heritage and traditions, and the effect of diminishing public access to our natural resources resulting from recent trends in land and wildlife management policies.

## Mission

The Maine Guides Education Fund's mission is to educate and advocate regarding outdoor recreation, public access, land conservation, land use policy, fish and wildlife management, and the sustainable use of natural resources, and to participate with Maine's industry, land owners, land managers, agricultural interests, State and Federal government, sporting and conservation groups to ensure the future of Maine's outdoor recreation heritage traditions including hunting, fishing, camping, canoeing and snowmobiling.

## Current Status

This will help MPGA raise the large sums needed to achieve that mission, and to grow into a full time operation.

There are still many things to be done in order to fully implement this plan. Much will be completed during this summer, but it greatly depends on the resources we have to work with.

The Fund was incorporated as a 501(c)3 non profit charity, and therefore all donations are tax deductible, and individuals, corporations and foundations have already begun donating.

## Kick-Off Challenges

The Grand Lake Stream Guides Association helped to launch this effort by donating \$1,000 at MPGA's Annual Banquet in April.

The Grand Lake area is a bastion of guides and guiding tradition. This group immediately grasped the importance of what MPGA is striving to do, and without hesitation came forth with our first donation.

Thanks to all Grand Lake Guides for this donation, and for challenging other guides to follow your lead!

And follow they did. Shortly after the Grand Lake Guides' announcement, others began to jump on board.

Immediately grasping our new sense of mission, visionaries Paul Reynolds and Vic Morin rushed to the podium to back up the Grand Lake Guides' donation with a major pledge and challenge of their own.

As Paul reemphasized the significance of this new fight to preserve our traditions, he added a huge incentive for other members to make donations. Paul and Vic pledged a free subscription to the Northwoods Sporting Journal for each of the first one hundred members who donate \$100 or more to the campaign. That pledge is worth \$2,295 to you, and \$10,000 to the campaign. Wow!

## Your Donation is Vital

Your donation is needed right now. These funds will get the ball rolling and will keep guides in the game. Please give what you can, and don't wait.

If we can keep getting out our messages about recreation, land use, and wildlife policies, we might not have to face more gates and doors shutting us out!

Please use the form below, and send what you can. All donations help, but remember, the first 100 who give at least \$100 will receive a free donation to the North Woods Sporting Journal!

The first 100 donors of \$100 or more will receive a Free Subscription to the Northwoods Sporting Journal worth \$22.95, thanks to V. Paul Reynolds & Vic Morin

## Please Accept my Donation to the "Maine Guides Education Fund"

Donation (Please Check):

\$25    \$50    \$100    \$200    \$500    \$1,000    \$5,000    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Subscription: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make your check payable to "Maine Guides Education Fund"**

**Mail this form and your check to:**

Maine Professional Guides Association, PO Box 336, Augusta, ME 04332-0336

**Visit: [www.MaineGuides.org](http://www.MaineGuides.org)**

## **Questions?**

**Can MPGA Raise \$100,000 more each year?**

...See Page 1

**Are Deer the Next Threatened Species in Maine?**

...See Page 10

**Want a 33% Discount at LL Bean?**

...See Page 14

**Will there be a Saltwater Fishing License?**

...See Page 5

**Do you want a Free Guides Rifle?**

...See Page 4

**Who cares about Waste of Maine's Wildlife?**

...See Page 8

**Must Alien Hunters Hire a Guide?**

...See Page 6

**How does the "Two Maines" Affect Guides?**

...See Page 7

***Be a Winner!***

**Win a Special MPGA  
Commemorative Marlin 45/70  
"Guides Model" Rifle**

**Find out how on Page 4**