



MICHIGAN UNITED CONSERVATION CLUBS

P.O. Box 30235, Lansing, MI 48909 | PH: 517.371.1041 | FAX: 517.371.1505 | www.mucc.org

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Dear Michigan Legislator,

Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) believes that natural resources management – including hunting, fishing and trapping - is essential to the health of the state's ecosystem, our residents' high quality of life and the health of our economy. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in 2011 hunters, trappers, and anglers spent almost \$4.8 billion in Michigan alone pursuing their passions, and \$90 billion nationwide. The sportsmen and women of the state *are* economic drivers.

However, there are significant threats to Michigan's fisheries and wildlife that must be properly resourced to protect, conserve, and enhance our natural resources. In particular, there are two issues at the forefront of sportsmen's minds that MUCC urges you to prioritize in next year's budget: invasive species and wildlife disease, particularly Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in white-tailed deer, which threaten our outdoor heritage in Michigan.

As you look towards the upcoming budget negotiations for the Michigan Fiscal Year 2017-2018, we expect that you will leverage the substantial investment that hunters, anglers, and trappers make by continuing to support and enhance key General Fund contributions to protecting and managing fisheries and wildlife, contained in the budget for the Department of Natural Resources. Specifically, MUCC's high priority General Fund/General Purpose funding requests and suggested boilerplate amendments for the Department of Natural Resource FY 2018 Budget are as follows:

- **Reauthorize \$1 million GF/GP for Chronic Wasting Disease surveillance and control (Sec. 106 Wildlife Management):**
 - \$1 million was appropriated in the FY 2017 Supplemental that was approved late last year. This was not included in the Governor's proposed FY 2018 budget.
 - In light of the 2017 discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease in heads turned in from a Mecosta County captive cervid (deer) farm, there will be a new location of effort for monitoring and surveillance necessary in addition to the 5-county area CWD Zone in mid-Michigan from 9 positive wild deer discovered in 2015-2016.
 - We request that you **create a new dedicated funding line item** for these expenses as we know there will continue to be a wildlife and public health need to monitor and control wildlife disease outbreaks.

- **Retain or increase the \$5 million GF/GP for Invasive Species Prevention and Control (Sec. 103-Department Initiatives).**
 - This is included in the proposed Executive Budget, which MUCC fully supports.
 - While we support deleting the related boilerplate language as recommended in the Governor's budget, we would like to suggest an amendment if there is a decision to retain it as follows. The intent of this change is to allow the department to contract with universities, non-profit organizations, and even for-profit companies in achieving the goals of invasive species prevention and control.
 - **SUGGESTED AMENDMENT:** Sec. 251. From the amounts appropriated in part 1 for invasive species prevention and control, the department shall allocate not less than

\$3,600,000.00 for grants **AND CONTRACTS** for the prevention, detection, eradication, and control of invasive species.

Hunters, anglers and trappers in Michigan contribute more than \$80 million of their own money through license fees to fisheries and wildlife management, along with the enforcement of these regulations each year. We hope that you will consider our request of \$6 million in General Fund to continue to leverage this investment and protect our outdoor heritage.

Sincerely,

Amy Trotter, Deputy Director