



MUCC

MICHIGAN UNITED CONSERVATION CLUBS

2020
Annual Report

Amy Trotter

Executive Director

Conservation proved to be a silver lining in 2020 and 2021. With substantial increases in license sales, sales of outdoor equipment and recreation on Michigan's public lands, more Michiganders than in recent memory found value and solace in Michigan's great outdoors.

In 2020, new hunters ages 10 to 16 increased 70 percent, and new hunters ages 17 to 64 increased 39 percent. MUCC is continuing to work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to ensure we don't lose communication with these folks and that we are doing everything in our collective power to welcome them into our community, provide any assistance they may need and help to usher them along as hunters and conservationists. These new hunters can breathe fresh life into marketing, messaging and promotion of our outdoor activities by helping us develop messages that resonate with less experienced hunters or those wishing to learn more about it.

MUCC emerged from the pandemic a little leaner, but in a way that has set the organization up for success in the future. We continued marching on despite canceled legislative meetings, virtual commission meetings and COVID orders that sometimes left more questions than answers.

In April of 2020, MUCC sued Governor Whitmer and DNR Director Dan Eichinger for their unconstitutional ban on motor boating via executive order. Days after the suit was filed, the order was rescinded. The organization then went to work ensuring that Michigan's charter captains and inland fishing guides could resume work in a way that was safe for all parties. MUCC wrote letters to the governor and worked with administration staff to help gun ranges — an economic driver for many MUCC affiliate clubs — reopen safely.

We are working to oppose the anti-hunters' attempts to disparage MUCC and conservationists, and we continue to work to establish a durable management plan for gray wolves through the Wolf Management Advisory Council and member-passed resolutions. And we will continue to champion good conservation policy for Michigan's waterways, public lands and wildlife.

As we look toward 2022, MUCC will continue to work to implement our members' policies, be at the tables that matter and continue to be the voice for 21st-century conservationists. We are the insiders for your outdoor traditions.



THE MUCC PILLARS



Advocacy



Communications



Education



Habitat

SINCE 1937

Greg Peter

MUCC President

(June 2020 - June 2022)

Throughout the past year and half of challenges, our organization has remained steadfast in its mission. Even though our field programs (On the Ground and On the Water) were constrained by the COVID measures, we were able to conduct the business (policy resolution formation and advocacy) via virtual methods.

We survived and thrived due to the excellent work of our office staff who kept us afloat with a PPP loan (and its forgiveness) and a continued effort to obtain grant monies. I should not fail to mention the significant philanthropic contributions of affiliate clubs (through direct contributions and TRACKS sponsorships) and especially individual members (estate designations and individual gifts). Not having a camp session, the lost income was also a challenge. Hopefully we will return to a residential camp in 2022. Surviving the many challenges of the pandemic has proven difficult but not impossible. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who suffered loss due to this disease, and our commitment to the mission of conserving our natural resource heritage remains strong.

I ask each and every one of you to ask how you and/or your community organizations can further the mission and programs of MUCC. Please reach out to your local community and school systems to engage the young members of your communities in outdoor activities — whatever they might be. Time spent in natural settings has proven to be both physically and mentally advantageous, regardless of the activity — even unstructured free time (a commodity in short supply these days) has proven beneficial to creativity and innovation — remember how a cardboard refrigerator box was so much fun as a kid? Using one's imagination and the opportunity to exercise it outdoors has provided me and many others with a lifetime of great memories and fun — the pursuit of happiness is a guarantee granted to all Americans — to do so in the great outdoors requires the responsibility of all of us to follow the oath we have taken as MUCC members.



MUCC EXECUTIVE BOARD

This is the current Executive Board

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Region 8

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Treasurer

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Region 5

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Region 6

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At-large Appointment

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Region 3

RON BURRIS
Region 7

LEON HANK
At-large Appointment

MUCC STAFF



Amy Trotter
Executive Director
atrotter@mucc.org
517-346-6484



Ian FitzGerald
Policy & Special Events Coordinator
ifitzgerald@mucc.org
517-346-6488



Sue Pride
Member Relations
spride@mucc.org
517-346-6480



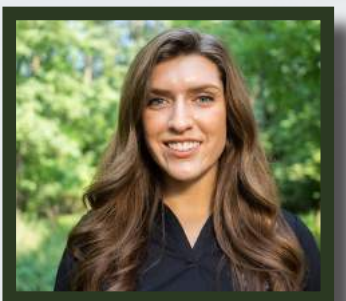
Shaun McKeon
Education Director
smckeon@mucc.org
517-346-6466



Nick Green
Public Information Officer
ngreen@mucc.org
517-346-6486



Logan Schultz
Systems Manager
lschultz@mucc.org
517-346-6483



Makhayla LaButte
Habitat Volunteer Coordinator
mlabutte@mucc.org
517-346-6456



Max Bass
Camp Director
mbass@mucc.org
517-346-6462



Mikayla Carter
Clubs Coordinator
mcarter@mucc.org
517-346-6463

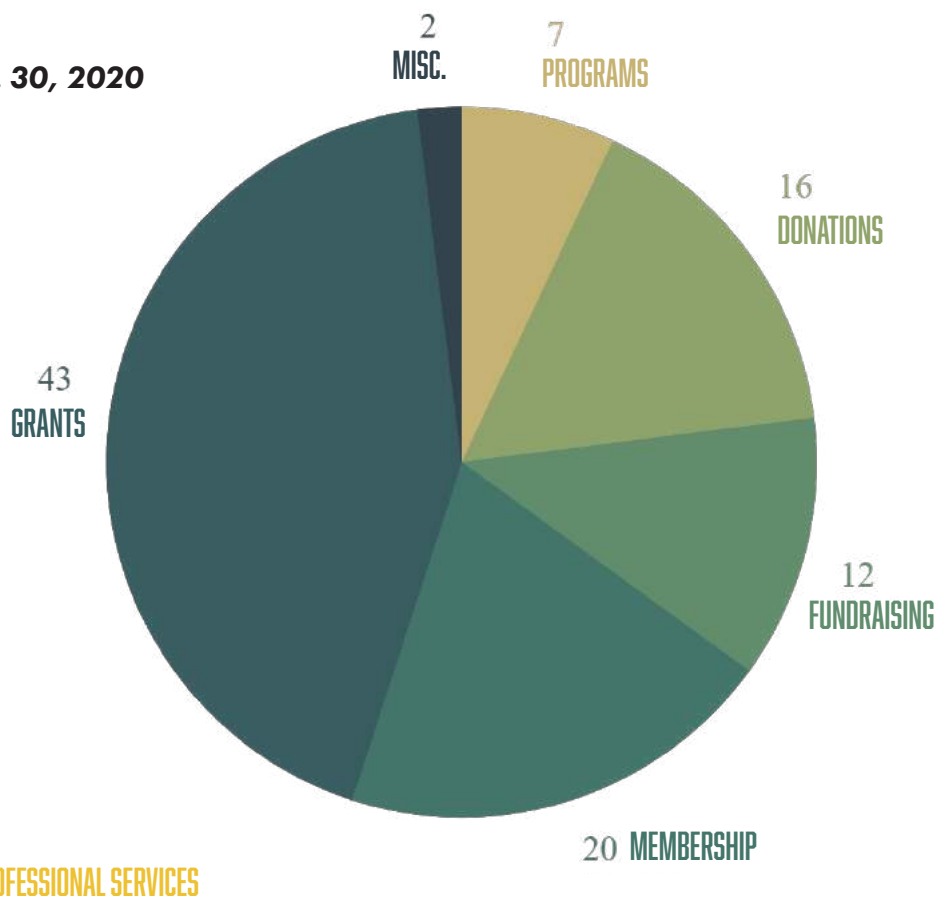
FY 2020 BUDGET

Fiscal Year: Oct. 1, 2019 - Sept. 30, 2020

Revenue

(by percent)

MUCC depends on membership dollars, fundraising and donations for unrestricted funding related to advocacy and program work.



Expenditures

(by percent)

Staff and benefits are shown separately from direct program and other expenses.

49 STAFF AND BENEFITS

POLICY

Member engagement in MUCC's grassroots process is a critical component of the organization's political clout and effectiveness. Without a robust and diverse membership of conservationists, we could not accomplish the work we do and be looked to as Michigan's conservation leader.

Efforts During the COVID-19 Pandemic

When our world was flipped upside down in March of 2020, MUCC geared up for months of advocacy that ultimately led to keeping our outdoor pursuits accessible when we needed them the most.

In April of 2020, Gov. Whitmer unconstitutionally banned the use of motorboats in an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19. In response, after unsuccessful attempts at working with the administration, MUCC filed suit against the State of Michigan and the Department of Natural Resources resulting in an abrupt rescission of the executive order.

MUCC then went to work ensuring fishing guides and charter captains, who were taking massive economic hits, were able to safely return to work if they chose to. Furthermore, MUCC worked diligently engaging with the administration to help our clubs' ranges begin to reopen — an important economic driver for many conservation clubs.

State-based Policy

In 2020, MUCC was successful in shepherding through legislation that created a \$25 pheasant license for residents pursuing pheasants in the Lower Peninsula on public lands or hunter access program lands. The funds raised from the program will go towards releasing pheasants annually on public lands open for hunting across the Lower Peninsula.

MUCC also got legislation across the finish line last session that reinstated a \$2 voluntary youth fishing license. Prior to 2013 when the license was still available, there were several community fishing programs that would take a bus of youth to a license vendor to instill license buying habits, and having a physical license as a kid is an honorable feeling. Each new licensed angler counts in the formula for federal Dingell-Johnson matching funds. MUCC is proud to have had a part in restoring this important tool for youth conservation education.

Michigan Natural Resources Commission

The spring turkey season for 2020 brought a 27 percent increase in license sales from the previous year. While much of this success can likely be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, MUCC did play a large role in this increased participation. At the end of 2019, MUCC successfully advocated for a Saturday opener through the Natural Resources Commission for the spring turkey hunting season based on a member-passed MUCC resolution. Just a few months later during the season, our advocacy efforts were hailed as a spike in participation showcased the effectiveness of our grassroots efforts and member engagement.

The Federal Front

In February 2020, MUCC developed and hosted a panel in Washington, D.C. to inform congressional leaders and staff about the impact of invasive Asian carp. Cosponsors of this briefing included National Wildlife Federation, American Sport-fishing Association, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, Tennessee Wildlife Federation and Mississippi Wildlife Federation as well as members from the Great Lakes Conservation Coalition. The focus of this briefing was to update staff on the latest threat of Asian carp but to also "nationalize" the problem beyond the Great Lakes.

The congressional briefing was well-attended by a geographically and politically diverse set of congressional staff with about 40 congressional offices represented. Each of these individuals were briefed on the pressing timeline and importance of authorizing and appropriating funds for the Brandon Road Lock and Dam project through the Water Resources Development Act of 2020. Concurrently, MUCC worked with the Michigan Legislature to provide critical financial assistance to the state of Illinois to complete this project.

EDUCATION

For the first time since 1946, the Michigan Out-of-Doors Youth camp was unable to host campers during the summer of 2020 due to the pandemic, and we were only able to host one week of camp in 2021. During a normal year, the facility and grounds at the Cedar Lake Outdoor Center are full of laughter and learning. Our six-week program supports about 400 campers joining us each summer for overnight experiences learning about Michigan's natural resources. Whether the campers are learning to shoot archery, hiking through the woods identifying trees or paddling their kayak while casting a line, our campers are building skills they can use for the rest of their lives.

To continue to engage youth and their families, our education staff came up with an at-home camp program. This program, designated "Camp-to-Go," was created from the traditional camp curriculum and was scaled so it could be done at home with individual children or family groups. Throughout the summer, we sent more than 150 copies of this curriculum to households around the state. A special thank you to the generous support of our camp families, clubs and donors such as the Abrams Foundation and Riley Foundation/SCI-Novi who helped make Camp-to-Go possible.

Although we were unable to host campers in 2020, the work on the facility never stops. MUCC has the privilege to maintain the historic Cedar Lake Outdoor Center. Built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the late 1930s, our facility is more than 80 years old. To preserve the historic integrity of our buildings as well as maintain a modern rustic standard to keep things safe for our campers, we are always working to improve our facility. During the summer of 2020, with generous support from Moore & Sons Roofing and Owens Corning, we put a new roof on our largest building on the property — our lodge.

Thank you to Ed Moore (Moore & Sons Roofing) for his generous donation and facilitation of \$24,500 worth of materials and labor to replace the roof on the George Riley Lodge in 2020.



HABITAT

On the Ground (OTG) is Michigan United Conservation Clubs' (MUCC) award-winning volunteer wildlife habitat improvement program. It is funded through a Memorandum of Agreement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife Division. Founded in 2013, this program has hosted more than 150 projects that have engaged more than 3,100 volunteers across Michigan in improving and restoring more than 3,000 acres of public land. All while simultaneously cultivating a strong stewardship ethic within the public.

In addition to annual OTG events focusing on native tree and shrub plantings, small game brush pile building, wood duck nest box installation, grassland habitat restoration and invasive species removal, the OTG program has also been involved with habitat improvement efforts on public land that impact rare and threatened species in Michigan. While some OTG projects often highlight the habitat needs of a specific species, a majority of projects are designed by wildlife professionals to enhance or restore the landscape for all native wildlife that utilize the area as habitat.

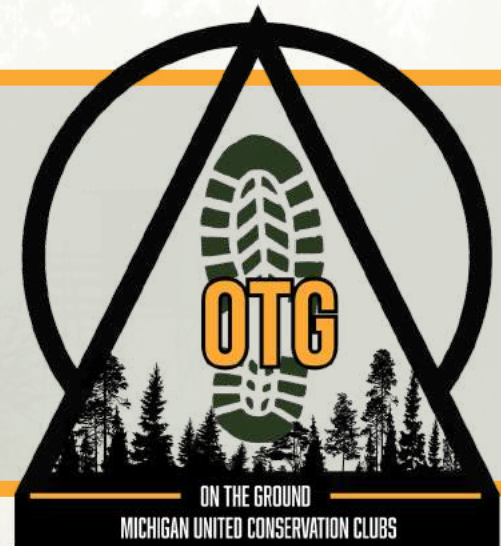


160
PROJECTS

3,176
ACRES IMPROVED

3,227
VOLUNTEERS

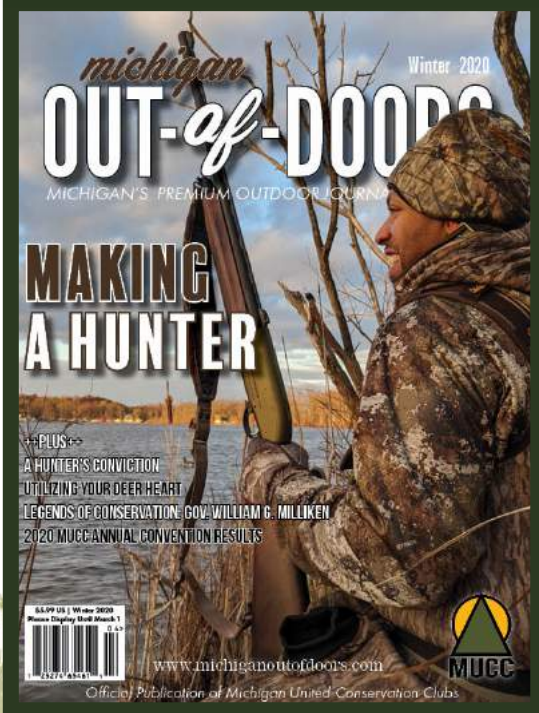
15,135
VOLUNTEER HOURS



The OTG program's volunteer events are rarely easy or convenient. They require volunteers to travel to distant and often obscure locations on public land, perform manual labor and sometimes even brave the elements. All this is done in the name of conservation. From the suburbs of Detroit to the wilderness of the Upper Peninsula, the OTG program has had an impact that spans all of Michigan.

Even more impressive than the geographical scope of the program is the diverse groups of outdoor enthusiasts that have volunteered with OTG. During OTG projects, hunters, anglers, trappers, birders, hikers, kayakers, foragers, naturalists and countless other conservationists of all ages join forces to improve wildlife habitat on public land that helps sustain their way of life.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION



COMMUNICATIONS

Michigan United Conservation Clubs' robust communications suite starts with Michigan Out-of-Doors magazine — Michigan's premium outdoor journal since 1947.

Publishing quarterly, the 100-page, feature-rich magazine seeks to entertain and inform members of MUCC and the general public through subscriptions and newsstand sales. Issue themes are generally season-specific and feature timely conservation news pieces and features meant to help members partake in all of the opportunities that Michigan's great out-of-doors offers.

Featuring some of the United States most prolific outdoor writers since its inception, Michigan Out-of-Doors' rich history is proud to include contributors like Ben East, John Ozoga, Tom Watson and Tom Huggler. Past editors include Ken Lowe and Dennis Knickerbocker — two giants in the outdoor publication industry. In 2020, MOOD Magazine reached more than 200,000 conservationists throughout Michigan.

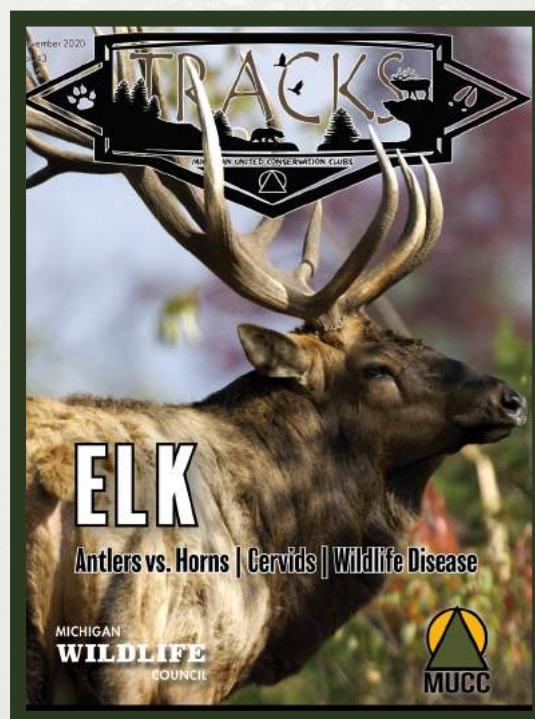
Michigan Out-of-Doors can be purchased on newsstands at various Kroger, Rite-Aid, Walgreens, Meijer, Walmart and Barnes & Noble locations throughout the state.

TRACKS Magazine is a cornerstone for many elementary students and teachers throughout Michigan and the Midwest. Developed to be used in tandem with science curriculum, TRACKS Magazine features a Michigan species each month of the school year and covers biology, human interaction, habitat requirements and conservation careers specific to the species highlighted.

Throughout 2020, TRACKS was able to accommodate more than 300 classrooms throughout the state. Whether students were in traditional classrooms, completely learning from home or in a hybrid model, teachers were able to reliably provide science-based education about Michigan's wildlife to their students throughout the year.

TRACKS publishes monthly from October through May each year. With a subscription rate of around 12,000 students, MUCC with the support of our affiliate clubs put nearly 100,000 magazines into the hands of teachers, students and families during 2020.

Stay up to date on conservation news and policy by subscribing to our Conservation Insider at mucc.org



2020 DONORS

Jan. 1, 2020 - Dec. 31, 2020

\$100,000

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\$53,456

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Reese Out of Doors Club

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MUCC

MICHIGAN UNITED CONSERVATION CLUBS

**Uniting citizens to conserve,
protect and enhance
Michigan's natural resources
and outdoor heritage**