



Late Winter / Early Spring 2025

UPEnvironment

Our 16th annual celebration of
Earth's freshwater heartland!

**"CONNECTING
MAKES THE
DIFFERENCE!"**

**Saturday, April 5
Peter White Public Library
Marquette, MI**

10:00AM - 4:00PM EST

Free & Open to All!



UPEC Annual General Membership Meeting & Election • 10:00 - 10:30AM

PWPL Community Room - All are welcome!

Join us for an introduction to the day and an overview of UPEC's activities in the last year. We'll cover our educational livestreams, the Mining Action Group, Protect the Porkies a tribute to the Friends of the Land of Keweenaw, and more. We will also announce our Community Conservation and Environmental Education grants as well as our photography contest winners. Thank you UPEC members for making it all possible!

CELEBRATE THE UP! 2025 KEYNOTE TALK • 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM

"Connecting Energy for Community Action" • PWPL Community Room

Dennis Ferraro, President, Citizens for a Safe and Clean Lake Superior



Learn how individual and community connections with our habitat here on Lake Superior's freshwater coast can energize and motivate Action to Protect this life sustaining *Paradise Not Lost*.

Bio: After retiring from a career as a trial attorney and General Counsel for a large Chicago firm, Dennis followed his instinct to come North and settle in the UP, a place holding life-long memories for him and his family. Feeling a deep connection to Lake Superior and its coastal habitat, he became a founding member, and current president, of Citizens for a Safe & Clean Lake Superior, a local citizen group which, in 2023, defeated a plan to build an industrial rocket launch site on Lake Superior's shoreline in Marquette County. Dennis currently serves on the Marquette Township Planning Commission.

Lunch • 12:00 - 1:00 PM • Suggested Location: Landmark Inn

"Great Lakes Poetry Festival: Wild Words of the Wild U.P." • 1:00 – 3:00PM

Kathleen M. Heideman, Beverly Matherne, Gala Mahlerbe, Lisa Fosmo, Christine Saari, Lynn Domina, and Marty Achatz. • *PWPL Shiras Room*



In partnership with the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition, PWPL presents a poetry reading on the environment from some of the U.P.'s wildest poets. No admission charge. For more information, contact Marty at 226-4322, machatz@pwpl.info, or visit www.pwpl.info

"Climate Change Jeopardy Game" • 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Steve Waller, Environmental Educator • *PWPL Community Room*



Test your team's knowledge on a variety of environmental topics with your host, Steve Waller. We'll follow traditional Jeopardy rules, although in this game it is multiple choice. We just ask you to separate fact from fiction. The team with the highest score wins!

Bio: Steve is a retired technical and environmental educator who lives on 80 acres of rugged timberland off-grid north of Marquette. He previously taught wind power and solar power classes at Northern Michigan University. He has taught a Reading the Woods program annually for the DNR for over 20 years and also operates the Waller Research Area from his home.

"Advocacy: Ways to Adjust to Our New Climate" • 2:00 – 3:00 PM

Steve Waller, Environmental Educator • *PWPL Community Room*



Since people are destined to live their future lives in a new and changing environment, this program gives practical examples of what to expect, how to avoid traditional traps, and how to start to break the grip of fossil fuel to make better choices for the future, starting today.

"Building The Newest U.P. Birding Trail" • 3:15 – 4:00 PM

Brian Murphy, Laughing Whitefish Bird Alliance • *PWPL Community Room*



Birding trails create new opportunities for environmental education and outdoor experiences by leading people to the best nature locations the UP has to offer. The Laughing Whitefish Bird Alliance (LWBA) hopes to extend the established eastern UP birding trails into the central UP. They envision a new driving/hiking birding trail to birding hotspots in Marquette, Alger, Schoolcraft, Delta, Dickinson, and Menominee Counties, and welcomes your expertise and input on creating this project. The mission of the Central UP Birding trail is to contribute to conserving all wildlife and their habitats, especially birds, through public engagement in exploring curated bird locations.

Bio: Brian Murphy is a LWBA board member who plans and leads area field trips. After studying wildlife biology at NC State University and a career teaching high school earth and environmental science in North Carolina, Brian retired to the Upper Peninsula in 2019. A lifetime birder and photographer, Brian is passionate about a whole-ecosystem approach to protecting the environment.

Dinner • 4:00 – 5:00 PM • Suggested Location: Landmark Inn

Music with Steve Hooper • 5:00 PM • Women's Federated Clubhouse

Join us for the rousing conclusion of this year's Celebrate The U.P. event. Come enjoy Steve Hooper's sumptuous tunes and mingle with UPEC Board members, speakers, and fellow Yoopers who love the UP!

Location Addresses:

- *Peter White Public Library (PWPL): 217 N Front St., Marquette MI 49855*
- *Landmark Inn: 230 Front St., Marquette MI 49855*
- *Women's Federated Clubhouse: 104 W Ridge St #4227, Marquette MI 49855*

Or watch online at www.youtube.com/@upenvironment



It is Not Easy to See a Moose in Upper Michigan, Although it is Possible

By Bill Ziegler

As a DNR fisheries biologist in the UP, I had to answer public wildlife questions at the DNR office, when wildlife biologists were not available. One time I was summoned to the front public contact counter when no wildlife division personnel were there. A man and woman wanted me to direct them to where they could see the “moose herd.” I told them I was not a wildlife biologist, although it was my understanding that moose were typically solitary animals, unless it is a cow with calves.

The man was incensed and said we, the DNR, had “falsely advertised” in the former DNR Magazine. He went on to say they had “driven all the way up to the Western UP from a suburb of Detroit just to watch the moose herd”.

Watching a herd of elk may be a possibility in the Pigeon River Country near Vanderbilt in the Northern Lower Peninsula, although moose are not herding animals. I post quite a few photos of moose, taken in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan on Facebook Michigan Nature Group sites. Almost every time I post a moose photo, I hear from one or more frustrated nature enthusiasts, who have tried to see a Michigan moose, and failed.

I am fortunate enough to live near the core zone of moose in the UP and I spend a lot of time a field, so my odds of seeing moose are much greater. I always carry my camera and telephoto lens while traveling around the UP on my early morning or evening commutes for hunting or fishing trips, in case I see moose or other wildlife. In addition, I use some trail cameras and camera traps placed in areas that moose frequent.

How to Increase Your Moose Viewing Odds

Since frustrated outdoors enthusiasts keep asking for any tips on how to increase their odds of seeing a Michigan moose, I offer the following.

Part of the challenge of seeing a moose in the mainland of Michigan is that there are only roughly just over 500 moose (DNR’s most recent Moose Population Survey) on a vast landscape. In speaking with two other UP moose photography colleagues, who also use trail cameras (Brian Baker and Gil Perry), we have found the majority of moose activity is at night. That fact alone makes them much

Above photo: Bull moose often lock antlers to determine who is the strongest, and therefore most suitable for a mate. Photo taken by a trail cam.
BILL ZIEGLER



▲ A bull moose wanders through a recent logging site. Photo taken by a trail cam. BILL ZIEGLER

harder to observe. As you would expect with an animal that is largely nocturnal, we have more moose observations during early morning and evening hours.

The best way to improve your chances of seeing a Michigan moose is to spend more time in their core habitat, especially during the early morning or late evening daylight hours. Essentially that is in Southern Baraga, Western Marquette and Northeast Iron Counties. Another Michigan city claims to be the moose capitol of Michigan, although the DNR has determined there are only about 100 moose in the Eastern UP. The people who commute on US-41 from Ishpeming to the west, M-95 north of Republic, and US-141 north of Amasa typically see more moose than any other main roads in the UP. Of course, there is a vast area of good moose habitat away from these main roads and sometimes the moose are not near any roads. A detailed county map or county map atlas would be useful to follow some of the gravel back roads through core moose country.

Most of my colleagues' and my moose sightings have been in new aspen clear cuts, or in wetland or pond areas (summer) where moose spend a lot of time feeding. We have observed that moose are really drawn to eat the new aspen and red maple shoots

usually present in a recently completed logging operation. There is quite a bit of logging occurring in the core moose habitat outlined previously so those are good areas to watch for them. Brian Baker said "moose especially like new cuttings with aspen and red maple shoots near a pond or other standing water". Moose are also known to eat rooted aquatic plants in ponds during the summer open water season.

Increased Moose Activity During The Rut

I have also observed over the years that my moose sightings increase during their annual rutting (mating) period. Bulls especially move more during that period, and possibly spend more time moving during the daytime. The moose mating season is during September and October. This past rutting season, I personally saw many more bull moose during October and early November around new clear cuts with lots of new aspen and red maple shoots than I have at other times of year. Some of my friends that travel a lot between their grouse hunting spots within the core moose zone have had more moose sightings on their back road travels. Of course, grouse season lines up well with the normal moose mating season.

Occasionally we UP motorists see a traffic stoppage along the main highways in the core moose habitat zone. It may feel similar to what is commonly observed in the National Parks further west where the park rangers refer to them as bison/elk traffic jams. In our case a motorist has seen a moose along the highway and other motorists have pulled over.



Above: A moose cow emerges from the water after scouring the pond bottom for aquatic vegetation. BILL ZIEGLER

When this happens, people can get excited and use poor judgement with their actions. My wife watched a woman jump out of her car with her cell phone and run toward an adult cow moose with calves along the road, to get a closer photo. This is bad on two levels. Of course, this often forces the moose to leave the scene, ruining it for everyone else. The other reason is a cow moose with calves is very capable of protecting its offspring and can front kick any threat to them. Moose have reportedly killed individual wolves with their hooves that were attempting to prey on their calves. Of course, it is best to keep your distance, especially from a cow with calves, or bull during the rut.



Above: A moose cow and her calf forage for late-summer nutrition before the long winter approaches BILL ZIEGLER

A Slowly Increasing Moose Population

In the last decade the general trend of the Michigan moose population has been increasing, although this rate of increase is very slow. The DNR had hoped to have about 1000 moose in the prime moose habitat by the year 2000. Moose were reestablished with a major effort of translocation during the mid-1980's, labelled "Moose Lift". That 1985 effort consisted of capturing 29 moose (10 bulls and 19 cows) in Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario and trucking them to an area near Michigamme, Michigan in western Marquette County. In 1987 the original moose transfer was followed up by a similar effort moving 30 more moose to the same area near Michigamme. Unfortunately, the population increase has been much slower than hoped for. DNR wildlife researchers said that natural mortality of moose has limited population growth. The deer parasite brain worm has not been as much of a problem as it was originally thought to be, as long as the moose stay in their core habitat zone according to Dr. Dean Beyer the recently retired DNR research biologist overseeing moose population studies in Michigan.

The moose's core habitat has lower numbers of whitetail deer due to more extreme winter conditions. So far DNR moose researchers have not found any one single major factor for the higher moose mortality rates. Moose vehicle collisions is still one of the largest

factors for moose mortality. Often moose-vehicle collisions are not like the typical deer running across the highway in front of the car. Moose are sometimes known to stand in the road at night as an oncoming vehicle or large truck approaches. The results are very bad for both the moose and especially a smaller vehicle.

In Summary

It is not easy to see a moose on the mainland of Michigan for all the reasons outlined above. It is a mistake to go on a long vacation up to the UP with the sole goal of that vacation just to see a moose. It is worth making an effort while in the UP to visit the core moose zone during your trip. Although lots of patience is required to result in a moose sighting, it is possible given some luck.



A moose cow and her calves search for young aspen shoots in a recent clear cut. BILL ZIEGLER

The Process Of Extraction¹

Selection from *THE CAVING GROUNDS*, forthcoming from Modern History Press in 2025. "The Process of Extraction" first appeared in *Passages North*

Kathleen M. Heideman, UPEC Board Member

| *The mine's exhaustion date is more than 20 years down the road....*²

365 days a year, round-the-clock, loss is taking place within the Empire Mine — miners sleep and eat at designated times, but the mine never sleeps, the mine never pauses in its chewing, the hole named Empire grows larger while you dream it: a red-dust dream of yellow trucks, each tire tall as a two-story house, moving in the landscape of the open pit, so far below they look like toys, then ants, then the ore-crush piles they carry are smaller than the sweet red crumb some yellow ant discovered on the far edge of your pillowcase, then no sense of scale at all — *that kind of loss*, where the ant-chewed hole widens into an Alice-in-Wonderland Mine, man-made wonder-of-the-world — remember that magnificent tunnel you were always digging to China as a child? Someone kept digging long after you lost interest — down! down, taking what they wanted as they went — down! down, to the heart-warmed mantlerock, to the stone arena where young men compete to woo the Other with brute force, twisting earth's arm until she cries *Uncle, Lover, Eat Me, Drink Me!* relinquishing such treasure to him as she alone should own, magnetite, hematite, taconite — down! down, to the labial entrance and the empty stope where a lover abandoned his workings for a redder vein — down! down, to the church of earthquakes and the caved-in basement and the bed of rusty rags from which Yeats said all our ladders start. *The Process of Extraction*, she begins, smoothing her picnic blanket over dusty grass, licking the lead of her pencil with deep concentration — then a dark door opens beneath her, a hole far deeper than any private loss. Where she falls, we fall. This is the Process of Extraction. These words are merely specimens from the shaft of our descent.

¹ extraction n.= ancestry, origin, descent v.= the work of removing, excavating, wrenching, uprooting, tooth-pulling.

² Dale Hemmila statement, Cleveland Cliffs Natural Resources Public Relations.



Ice fins form on the underside of O Kun De Kun Falls in the Ottawa National Forest. NATHAN MILLER

An Educational Program Concerning Mining

Kathleen M. Heideman, UPEC Board Member

Here's how it works, our leader says, picks people from the audience at the Iron Mining History Museum, sorts us by height, makes everybody lift their arms straight out in the air. Our aligned row of necks and our upright spines he calls *the Mine Shaft*. Our parallel lifted arms he calls *Drifts on Consecutively Deeper Levels*. Some mines, he tells us, went down a hundred levels, several thousand feet or more. The tallest fellow's head is the shaft house, his ears are *iron wheels* grooved for hoisting cables. He is ordered to *whistle & squeal & screech*. Fathers are chosen to use their bare hands as *shovels & picks*. The rest of us wait with arms upraised, standing there like we're surrendering. Our leader tells us to send up iron, we must use our hearts, arteries, biceps, stoop and lift, shovel and fill, hammer and blast. *Are you feeling it? It's hard work, a messy business, ore!* A few of our fathers are told to lay down on the floor now, *injured or killed, crushed*, and our leader runs through tossing something between our feet, toy mice made from scraps of rabbit fur. *Rats, everywhere you looked there were rats!* he yells.

He's excited now, blowing red dust over us, powdered blood meal. We inhale it and cough. We're sweating now, shouting and squealing and blasting and shoveling and hoisting, waving arms and stooping, red dust caking on wet skin. The audience looks uneasy. *You're the Location, the neighborhood around the mine*, he tells them. He throws red dust on them. *See, red was orebody, red was labor*. He says *men died wheezing, red lung*. He says *Millions of Tons. Billions! Fame & fortune! Are you listening? Are you getting this? Laundry drying on the line turned pink, we took our rock and turned it into Money!* A girl in the audience is weeping, a woman objects, but too late. *Proud history*, says our leader.

He gives our fathers scrip, takes it back again. He sells them candles and blasting caps. He plants our mothers here and there, he calls them *virgin pines*, makes them chant *Pines hold up the Mines!* — limbs jutting, limbs akimbo, tossing wild hair, snapping under pressure. The leader says we must cut down our mothers to make more mining timbers. *I didn't ask for this*, whimpers a boy covered with dust; the boy and his grandmother coughing, rubbing eyes. *We must think about what Industry needs*. The leader tells the children to join hands now, teaches them to sing, *There's a Treasure in the Ground, Dig it Out, Dig it Out! There's a Treasure in the Ground — Dig it Out!* They repeat it, jumping up and down in their seats, coughing and stomping their feet while we, a mining machine made of fathers and mothers and children — *Dig it Out, Dig it Out* — go on shoveling and grinding and sweating, shuddering and blasting and suffering. *Dig it Out!* — not sure how we got into this or how we make it stop.



Pitcher plant flowers in bloom. NATHAN MILLER

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Nearly two centuries of mining impacts have left their mark on our landscape. NATHAN MILLER

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- \$_____ UPEC General Fund
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- \$_____ Community Conservation Grants
- \$_____ Environmental Education Grants

- ☐ My contribution is in honor/memory of

Please give us the honoree's contact information on the space below this form; or, if a memorial, the name and information for a family member.

Please clip and mail along with your check to: UPEC, P.O. Box 673, Houghton, MI 49931

Thank you for your support!

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