



Citizens for Professional Wildlife Management

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Petition Drive Launching for Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act

Initiated law would protect NRC ability to name game species and issue fisheries orders

LANSING—The Michigan Board of Canvassers will be asked to approve the form of a petition for a citizen-initiated law, called the Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, when they meet Monday December 2. The proposed act would protect the Natural Resources Commission's ability to name game species and issue fisheries orders, protect free licenses for active military members, and include funding for rapid response activities to keep Asian carp out of Michigan waters.

The petition is sponsored by the Citizens for Professional Wildlife Management (CPWM), a coalition of many of the same organizations that successfully passed Proposal G in 1996 under the same name. The petition drive must gather at least 258,000 valid signatures in 180 days to place the law before the Legislature.

"This is about making sure that decisions about fish and wildlife management are made by relying on sound science and the recommendations of biologists, not activists or television commercials," said Merle Shepard, chairman of CPWM.

The Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act provides that the Natural Resources Commission may designate game species under a duty to use sound science, that active military members can receive free hunting, fishing and trapping licenses, and that the Natural Resources Commission has the exclusive authority to issue fisheries orders. To support the NRC's ability to manage fisheries, \$1 million is appropriated so that the Department of Natural Resources can conduct rapid response activities necessary to prevent and eliminate aquatic invasive species like Asian carp.

"This initiative will show that the people of Michigan believe in using biology to make fish and wildlife decisions" said Erin McDonough, executive director of Michigan United Conservation Clubs. "It also provides the resources to make scientific fisheries decisions by making sure the DNR can respond rapidly to aquatic invasive species like Asian carp."

Supporters of the initiative include Michigan United Conservation Clubs, the Upper Peninsula Sportsmen's Alliance, Upper Peninsula Whitetails Association, U.P. Whitetails of Marquette County, the Michigan Bear Hunters Association, the Michigan Trappers and Predator Callers Association, the Michigan Hunting Dog Federation, the Michigan chapters of Safari Club

International, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Michigan Bow Hunters, Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Anglers Association and numerous local conservation organizations from around the state.

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