

FOREWORD

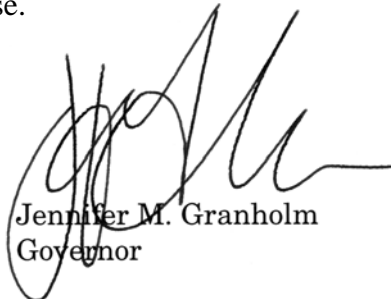
Michigan's wildlife is as unique as the shape of its shoreline and the variety of habitats found within its borders. Whether it is a moose in the Upper Peninsula, canvasback ducks on Lake St. Clair, or lake sturgeon in the Northern Lower Peninsula, wildlife helps define Michigan's sense of place. Our state's history is inseparably linked to its wildlife.

Michigan's first human occupants followed prehistoric animals and settled lands as the glaciers retreated. Places like Detroit, Sault St. Marie, and Mackinaw City owe their existence to the fur trade which established and supported early economies.

Today, our wildlife heritage is threatened. Invasive species continue to impact both the indigenous species and habitats that support them. Fragmentation of our landscape impedes wildlife movement and reduces the value of habitats to support wildlife species. Sedimentation, pollution, wetlands loss, even changes in the way a stream flows, can alter the habitats that support our wildlife.

The Michigan Wildlife Action Plan is a major step in the journey to preserve our outdoor heritage. The task will not be easy. It cannot be accomplished through the individual actions of state or federal agencies, or of private conservation organizations, businesses, hunters, anglers or bird watchers. It will require a broad partnership of all, contributing their unique knowledge and skills to accomplish this task. This action plan provides the framework from which to build that partnership and offers a broad range of needed wildlife conservation actions. All of us who love wildlife will find some action that fits our interest and opportunities for involvement.

The mournful call of a common loon echoing across a mirrored lake, the glimpse of an owl gliding on silent wings, the scent of a spring pond as frogs awaken from their winter nap, or the tingle of hair rising on your neck as you listen to a gray wolf howl -- each of these sensory experiences represent a unique opportunity and blessing offered by Michigan's wildlife. Wildlife enriches our lives through their song, their behaviors, and even their simple presence. Our outdoor heritage depends on our willingness to act to reduce or remove the threats to our state's wildlife diversity. I encourage every one of Michigan's citizens to become involved in this effort. Our state, our sense of place, and the future of our wildlife species depend on our response.



Jennifer M. Granholm
Governor