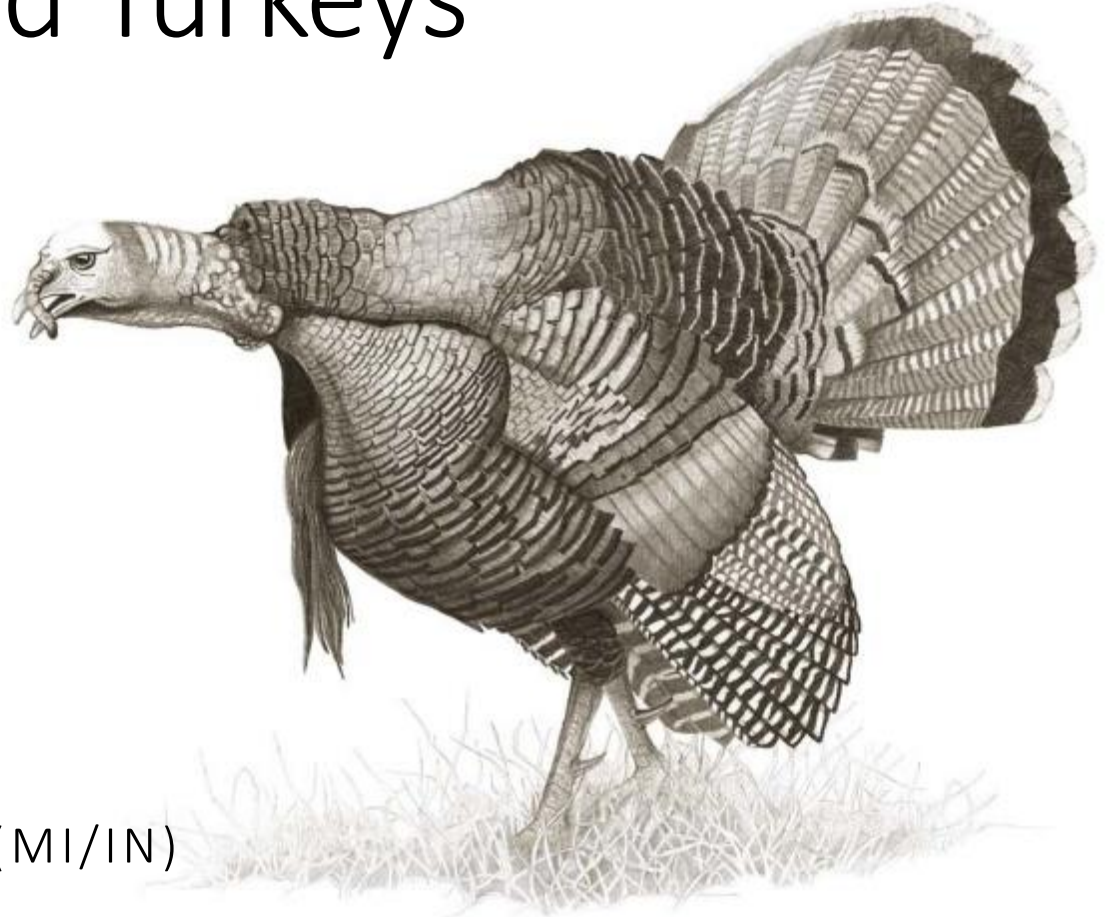


Strategies for Managing your Land for Wild Turkeys



RYAN BOYER

REGIONAL BIOLOGIST (MI/IN)

NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION

Overview

1. Who is the NWTf?
2. What do we do?
3. Wild Turkey Background and Ecology 101
4. Seasonal Habitat Requirements
5. Forest Management
6. Openings Management
7. NWTf Project Examples



The NWTf

- The NWTf was founded in 1973
- Nationwide grassroots conservation organization
- Mission: “Dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of our hunting heritage”
- One of the primary conservation organization to assist state agencies with the restoration of the wild turkey in the U.S.



What We Do

- Biologist, Foresters, and Conservation Staff across the U.S.
- Lands Program
- Public Policy
- Fundraising and Major Gifts
- Seed Program
- Energy For Wildlife Program
- R3 Staff



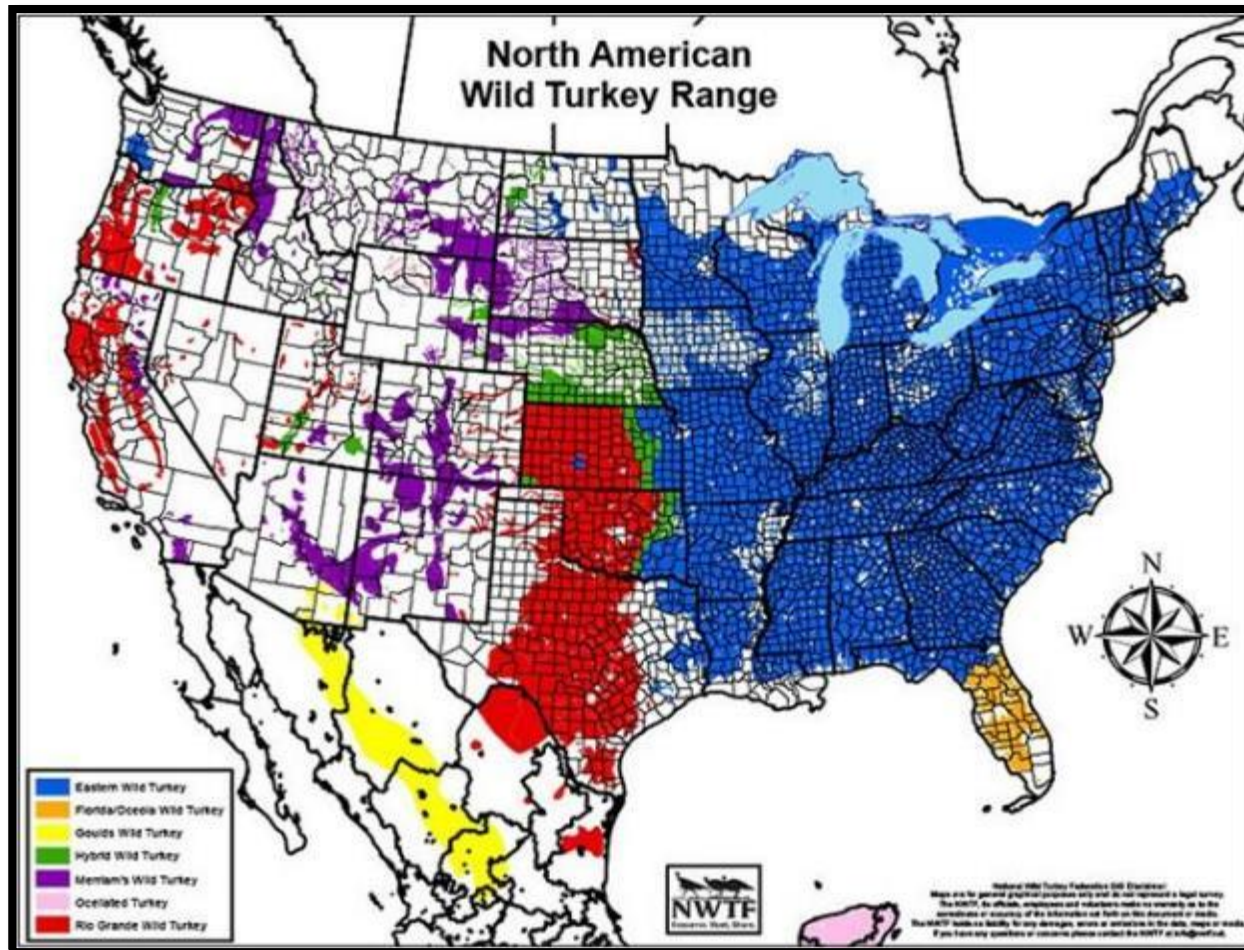
**SAVE THE
HABITAT.**

**SAVE THE
HUNT.**



- 4 Million Acres of Critical Upland Habitat Conserved or Enhanced
- 1.5 Million New Hunters Created
- 500,000 Acres of New Access

Historical Range vs. Present



Wild Turkey Ecology

- 5 subspecies in North America
- Ground Nesting (10-12 eggs average clutch size)
- Diet = 90% plant matter; 10% animal matter
- Home Range up to 2 square miles (Eastern Wild Turkey)
- Hens consume > 2 lbs/ week, Adult gobblers consume 3.5-7 lbs/ week

4 Primary Food categories

1. Mast (Fruits and nuts)
2. Vegetation
3. Seeds
4. Insects



Cover Requirements

- Food, Cover, Water, and Space
- 50/50 Mixture of Mature Forests and Open Areas
- Understory Trees and Shrubs
- Conifers for Roosting and Thermal Cover
- Grasslands and openings Nesting and Brood Cover



Landowner Checklist Example

Habitat Component	Availability/Quality			
	High	Medium	Low	Absent
Food				
Nesting cover				
Brood-rearing cover				
Forest cover				
Roosting cover				
Water				
Interspersion of habitat components				

Winter Food Sources

Agricultural Waste Grains

- Corn, buckwheat, soybeans, oats, etc.

Consideration for standing crops

Prefer hard and soft mast

- Acorns, beechnuts, crabapples, etc.
- Foods High in Carbohydrates
- Aids in maintaining critical lipid reserves



Food Selection by Season



Forest Management

1. Important to have a long-term plan
2. Discussions with Forester and Wildlife Biologist
3. Mast and forage production
4. Maintaining forest openings
5. Small and large tracts OK
 1. 1,000 acres to 1,200 acres usually necessary, but...

Long Term Forest Management Plan

1. Inventory Timber Size Class
2. Forest Cover Types (species)
3. Understory
4. Diversity
5. Nearby Agriculture Activities
6. Key Wildlife Habitat Areas

Forest Management

Uneven-aged Management

- Both Single Selection and Group Selection
- High-grading can result in a less productive forest
- Can eliminate a lull in food/ mast production
- Selective removal of less desirable species and maintain quality species

Forest Management

Even-aged Management

- Clear-cutting
- Can promote less shade tolerant species desired by turkeys such as oaks and black cherry
- Can see long term gaps in food production
- Promote growth of fruit-bearing shrubs
- Early successional habitat great for nesting and brood rearing turkeys
- Identify fruit-bearing shrubs and trees prior to harvest and avoid logging damage

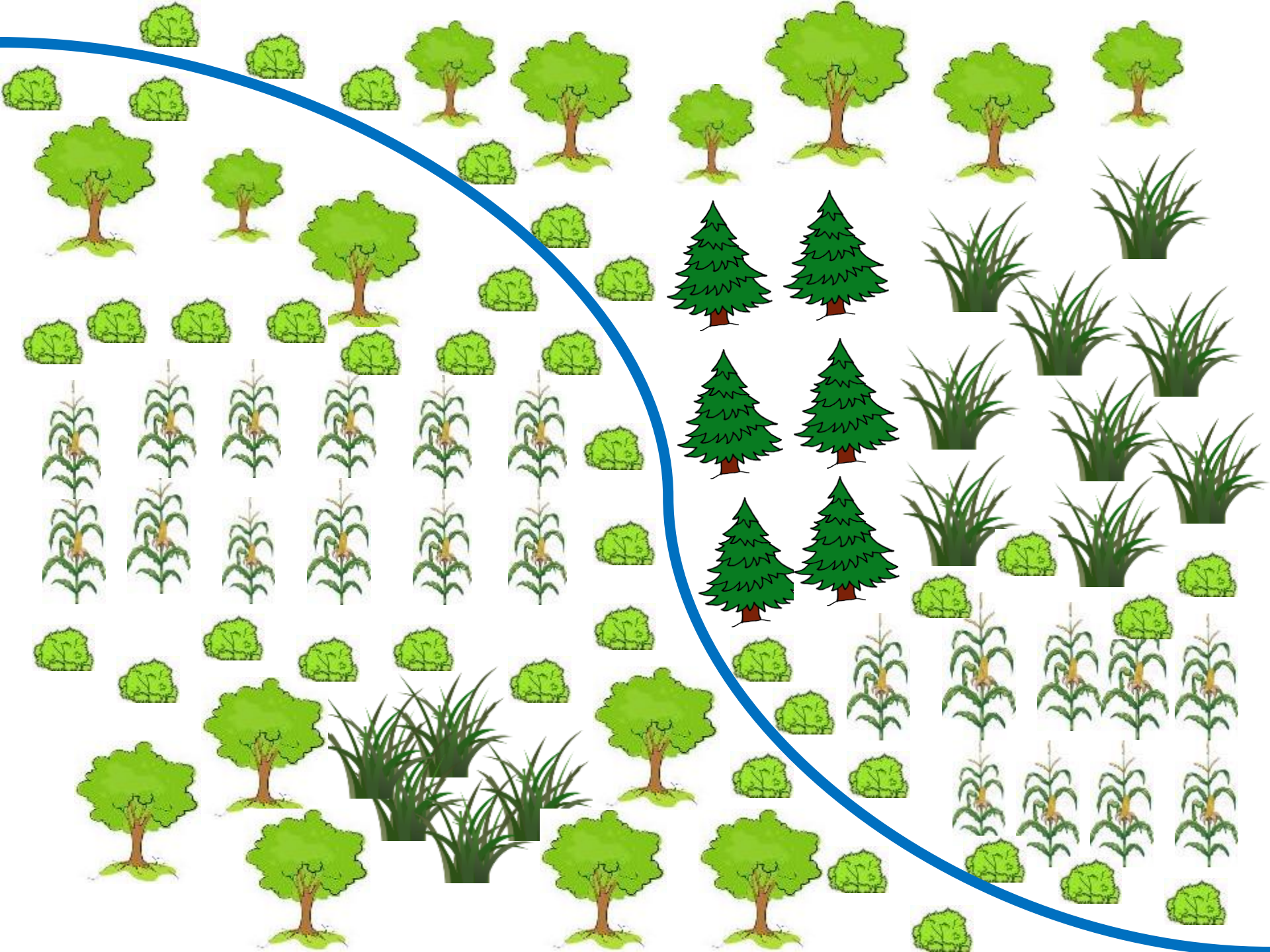
Forest Management Considerations

- Maintain strips 50-100 yards along streams or waterways
- Promote soft mast production through planting
- Create or maintain forested openings, trails, landings
- Rx Fire
- Invasive species considerations
- Spot treating less-desirable species

Wildlife Openings Management

- Wild turkeys thrive in areas habitats with greater than 10% openings
- Openings Management plantings examples:
 - Native warm season grasses and wildflowers
 - Grain producing crops
 - Rye, Clover, Buckwheat
- Wildlife Shrubs (Soft Mast)
- Species examples include:
 - crabapple, dogwood, hawthorn, mountain ash,
 - sumac, viburnum, wild grape, wild plum,
 - chokeberry, serviceberry





Management Considerations

Create or maintain wildlife openings, grasslands, shrubs

Maintain the hard mast producing trees (oaks, beech, hickory)

Provide or maintain thermal cover

Understand proximity of food sources to cover sources

Consider planting soft mast food sources available in winter months (crabapples, hawthorn, etc.)

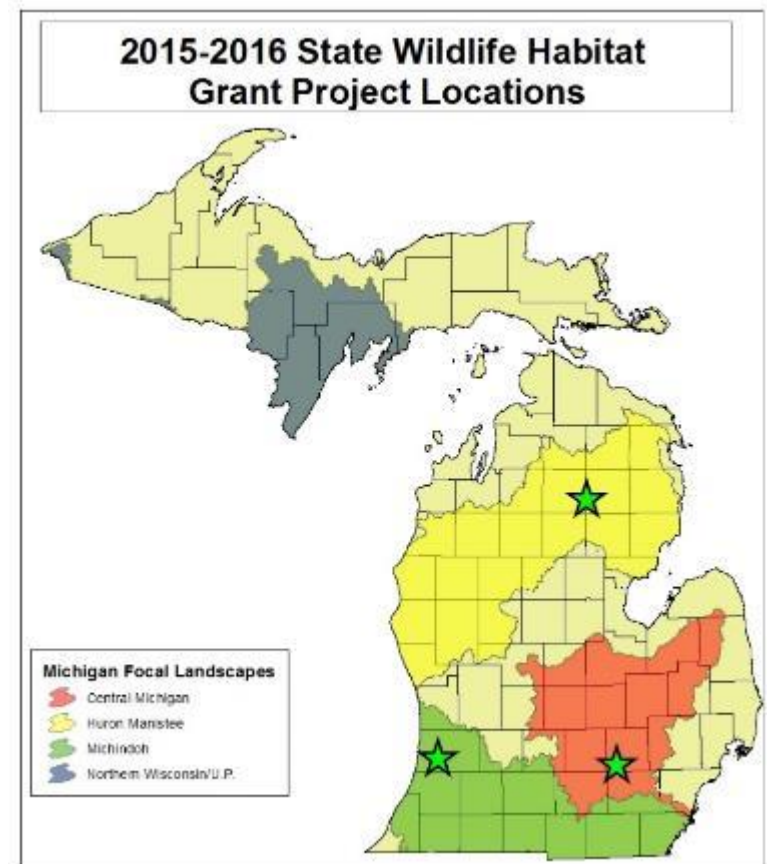
Consider surrounding properties and requirements

NWTF Example Projects



Michigan State Wildlife Habitat Grant Program

- Hunter License Dollars
- Up to a 10:1 Match
- Awarded 5 Grants (\$408,000)





Manistee National Forest
White River/ Otto Oak Savanna
Restoration Project



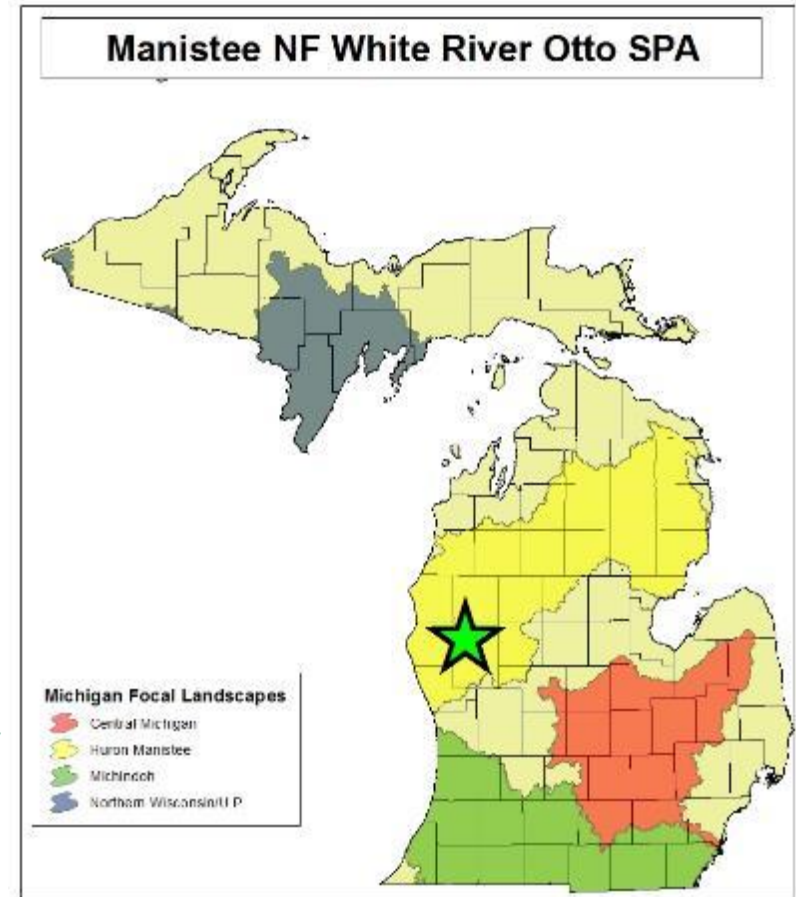
Huron-Manistee Project

Karner blue butterfly

\$520,000 Agreement (2 Modifications)

\$260 Timber Value (Non-commercial)

550 acres of Service Work







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Thank You



Ryan Boyer
Regional Biologist (MI/IN)
National Wild Turkey Federation
rboyer@nwtf.net
231-878-5131

