

THE MINNESOTA SHARPTAILER

Winter 2025 Issue

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www.sharptails.com



Photo provided by the North Dakota Game and Fish

Exciting News: We received a \$500,000 Grant to Improve Habitat for Sharp-Tailed Grouse!

By: James Meadow, EC Assistant Habitat Coordinator & Northeast Regional Representative

We are thrilled to announce that our organization has been awarded a **\$500,000 Traditional Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL) grant!** This is our first Traditional CPL award, and it represents a monumental step forward in our mission to enhance and restore critical sharp-tailed grouse range across Minnesota.

This grant will fund a set of transformative projects focused on enhancing eight key public land parcels in the East Central, Southwest, and Northwest regions of Minnesota. These areas are home to vital sharp-tailed grouse populations, including several lek sites that have suffered from habitat degradation due to invasive species, encroaching brush, and forest growth. Each site was carefully selected in collaboration with Wildlife Area Managers and is part of an interconnected habitat complex essential for the species' long-term viability.

Our work will involve primarily targeted brush removal and invasive species control in known dancing grounds and adjacent habitat. Prescribed burning will also be used where appropriate to mimic historic disturbance regimes, which are essential for maintaining the open grasslands and early successional habitats that sharp-tailed grouse depend on for dancing, nesting, and foraging.

This project comes at a critical time. Sharp-tailed grouse populations in East Central Minnesota have been steadily declining, while populations in the Northwest remain strong, and the Southwest sees encouraging signs of expansion. By restoring these degraded habitats, we aim to reverse population declines, bolster genetic diversity, and support the overall health of these ecosystems.

Thank you to our members and supporters who have helped make this possible. Together, we are ensuring a brighter future for Minnesota's sharp-tailed grouse and the landscapes they call home! Stay tuned for updates as we bring this ambitious project to life.



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Mike's Message to the Members

Mike Chalich, MSGS President

I hope many of you found the time to hunt some birds this fall! Peggy and I made a day trip to Lake of the Woods County with our Llewellyn setter; Coal, and we harvested one sharp-tailed grouse. A successful hunt on a beautiful day! While not as many as last year, ruffed grouse were still plentiful on our property. Coal turned three in December, and it has been fun watching his skills develop. He sure works hard!

Pheasants Forever selected MSGS for their Partnership of the Year Award! You'll see some photos later on in this newsletter! I attended the Pheasants Forever MN State Convention in Willmar on January 18th to accept the award on the behalf of MSGS. This is a wonderful award from our very important partner!

Your MSGS team moved into the big leagues in habitat enhancement! We have been awarded a \$500,000 traditional grant that requires a 10% match of \$50,000 for sharp-tailed grouse conservation. Donations of cash or volunteer work hours from you, our members, makes a difference! Thank you! We, MSGS, have been playing in the \$50,000 grant arena. We've done such a good job, we were encouraged to up our grant request. Thanks to Dave Pauly, Director at Large/Habitat Coordinator and James Meadow, NE Region Representative, the proposal was accepted!

MSGS will be conducting a 2025 membership drive. We will have a prize drawing early in 2026. All members will be included! Prizes are being put together now and we have some dandy donations coming in! More details in the next newsletter! Please help us sign up a new member!

If you've never attended our Double Gun event, you are missing out on so much fun! A ticket includes a membership, so if a member buys a ticket, your membership is good for another year! We will be holding a NW and EC brush cut again this spring! It's fun, helps the birds, and we help satisfy our match requirements for grants with those volunteer hours! Hope to see you there!

The 2024 President's Award winner is Joe Quehl! Joe stepped up and volunteered to be our Newsletter Editor when Jodie Provost moved to North Dakota. When we had a vacant Secretary position, he again said he would accept those responsibilities as well. Being nobody threw their name in the hat for an election, the Board of Directors voted to appoint Joe, per our bylaws. Thank you Joe! You are doing excellent work for MSGS!

The newsletter has a new recipes page now featuring tried and true wild game recipes from other MSGS members. Any recipe will be considered for a future edition, please send what you'd like to share to Joe! I know I'll be submitting a few!

Time goes by quickly! This spring, we will hold elections for President, Treasurer, and NE and SW Region Representatives. I will run again for another two year term, because there's more to accomplish! I'd appreciate your vote! Good things are happening with MSGS and more to come! Gretchen, our treasurer, James, our NE Region Representative, and Sabin our SW Region Representative will also run for re-election. WE have a solid Board of Directors folks! However, if any of you would like to run for any position, I encourage you to do so! We still have a need for help in several areas within MSGS! If you have time to volunteer and want to, please contact me.

Michael Chalich, President MSGS
michael_chalich@hotmail.com

Board of Directors:

Executive Board

President - Mike Chalich
Vice President - Nate Basinger
Secretary - Joe Quehl
Treasurer - Gretchen Mehmel

Regional Representatives

NW - Gary Huschle
honkerharmony@gvtel.com
NE - James Meadow
jfmeadow@gmail.com
SW - Sabin Adams
sabin.j.adams@gmail.com
SE - Ray Marshall
romjwm@comcast.net

Coordinators

Habitat - Dave Pauly
NW Assistant Habitat - Brian Hanson
EC Assistant Habitat -
Nate Basinger and James Meadow
Outreach/Newsletters - Joe Quehl
Website/Facebook - James Meadow
Membership - Dylan Mortenson
Fundraising/Merchandise - Bailey Petersen
Give To The Max Day - Bailey Petersen
Student Advisor - Bill Faber

Honorary Directors

Roche Lally, Bill Berg, Jamie Slade, Dave Pauly



The Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society is dedicated to the management and restoration of sharp-tailed grouse in Minnesota for hunters and non-hunters.

Nominees for Board of Directors Elections

The Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society will be holding elections this spring for four board positions. Officer positions on the Board of Directors are two-year terms and are great ways to serve MSGS and help sharp-tailed grouse in Minnesota. There are four positions up for election this year:

President: Lead and oversee the board of directors for all MSGS functions and help MSGS achieve its mission, objectives, and goals for the organization.

- Current Nominees: Mike Chalich (running for re-election)

Treasurer: Responsible for managing the budget of MSGS and keep detailed financial records for the organization.

- Current Nominees: Gretchen Mehmel (running for re-election)

Regional Representatives (NE, and SW): Responsible for recruiting, engaging, and representing members in their region to the board of directors and helping to organize habitat management days/events in their regions.

- Current Nominees: Northeast region-James Meadow (running for re-election)
Southwest region-Sabin Adams (running for re-election)

If you are interested in running for these positions please reach out to Joe Quehl at (joseph.o.quehl@gmail.com) by March 7th so that you will be included on the ballot. Elections will be conducted by mail in and online ballots with the spring newsletter this March.



Looking for New Leaders to Fill New Coordinator Positions

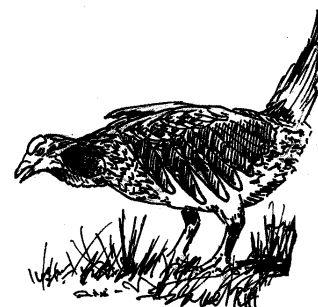
Are you interested in helping to conserve sharp-tailed grouse in Minnesota, but don't necessarily want to serve on the Board of Directors? The MSGS has a lot of volunteer opportunities available to any member that is interested in helping out! This year, the board of directors has three newly created coordinator positions to help achieve MSGS's objectives. Descriptions of these new positions can be found below:

Outreach Coordinator: This position would be focused on helping tell MSGS's story and promote the organization by writing articles for magazines or news papers, and helping organize various outreach events (membership drives, podcast appearances, etc.)

Social Media Coordinator: In this role, the person would help MSGS manage their Facebook and Instagram page and engage members by keeping them up to date on upcoming events. They would also help write and create posts for both platforms to promote updates within the organization and sharp-tailed grouse management as a whole.

DNR Liaison: MSGS is looking for a MN Department of Natural Resources employee (current or retired) to assist the board of directors as a liaison between MSGS and the MN DNR to help organize events, and keep the MSGS apprised of opportunities for collaboration between the two organization.

All three of these positions are non-elected positions so if you are interested in serving as any of them please reach out to Mike Chalich (michael_chalich@hotmail.com).



Upcoming Event with MSGS

Volunteer Brush Cut Day—Deer Run WMA, Aitkin County

Date: April 5th, 2025 at 9:30 am—3:00 pm (lunch will be provided)

Location: Deer Run WMA, off Osprey Avenue north of Aitkin, MN

Volunteer brush cut day where we will be removing brush from Deer Run WMA to help improve sharp-tailed grouse habitat and provide volunteer hours for a various grant opportunities in the area. For more information see the attached flier [here](#) or contact NE Regional Representative, James Meadow, 510-314-3999 or at jfmeadow@gmail.com.

Volunteer Brush Cut Day—Palmville WMA, Roseau County

Date: April 12th, 2025 at 9:30 am-1:00 pm with lunch to follow

Location: Palmville WMA, off Roseau County Highway 6

Volunteer brush cut day where we will be removing brush from Palmville WMA to help improve sharp-tailed grouse habitat and provide volunteer hours for habitat management grants. For more information see the attached flier [here](#) or contact NW Regional Representative, Gary Huschle, 218-407-7173 or honkerharmony@gvtel.com

3rd Annual Double Gun Shoot

Date: April 27th, 2025 at 12:30-5:00 pm

Location: Wings North Hunting Club
19379 Homestead Rd
Pine City, MN 55063

This is an annual fundraiser sponsored by the Wings North Hunting Club where attendees can participate in two rounds of shooting clays! Meal to follow the sporting clays. More detailed information follow this link to the [flier](#) or contact Dave Pauly at 320-279-1777 or davepaulyc@gmail.com.

Registration: To register, mail a check made payable to MSGS of \$60 to Gretchen Mehmel Brichem (2788 Bankton Road SW Baudette, MN 56623) or venmo \$60 to [mnsharptails](#). Registration will also be available at the door.



Volunteer opportunity this spring! MSGS hopes to help the MN DNR staff this year in monitoring sharp-tailed grouse leks throughout Minnesota. So if you want to help monitor historic sharp-tailed grouse leks in the northwest and east-central regions please reach out to Mike Chalich (michael_chalich@hotmail.com) or Dave Pauly (davepaulyc@gmail.com).

MSGS receives MN Pheasants Forever's Award

MN Pheasants Forever State Convention, Jan. 16-18—Willmar, MN



MSGS President, Mike Chalich, receiving the award for Partnership of the Year on the behalf of MSGS from MN State Coordinator of Pheasants Forever, Sabin Adams (MSGS's SW Regional Representative).

MSGS was honored this year by being awarded the Partnership of the Year award from Minnesota Pheasants Forever! MSGS has partnered with the habitat organization, Pheasants Forever, on numerous projects for decades. During the ceremony, Sabin Adams, MN State Coordinator and SW regional representative, highlighted the work we've done together where "we have partnered with Pheasants Forever to purchase more than a dozen WMA's covering more than 4,000 acres [...] and have restored and enhanced tens of thousands of acres of upland habitat." A lot of this work has been made possible from our work together in applying from state run grants through the Outdoor Heritage Fund and working together to complete projects in both the East-central and Northwest regions of the sharp-tailed grouse range.

The award was presented to us at the annual Minnesota Pheasants Forever State Convention in Willmar, MN on January 18th. MSGS President, Mike Chalich, and Habitat Coordinator/Honorary Director at-large, Dave Pauly, accepted the award on MSGS's behalf. Mike came back saying there was a lot of people there interested in becoming members of MSGS and gained one new life member! Two great organizations working together towards the common goal of improving habitat for grassland and prairie species in Minnesota! Overall a great event and we are very honored to receive this award and look forward to continuing to grow this partnership to do our best to help conserve sharp-tailed grouse habitat.

New Wildlife Management Area Dedication

MSGS recently partnered with Pheasants Forever to complete the largest property acquisition in Minnesota Pheasants Forever history! We helped acquire a property in Lake of the Woods County that will add 1,300 acres to the Carp Swamp Wildlife Management Area which is part of an existing 14,000 acre habitat complex. This complex consists of large swaths of lowland brush that will be managed by the Minnesota DNR for the fire bird! MSGS and Pheasants Forever will be holding a dedication event at the newly acquired property on May 3rd at 3:00 pm to mark the completion of this huge success for sharp-tailed grouse and public land hunters in Minnesota!



Meeting Minutes from January Board Meeting

Zoom Meeting—January 6, 2025 4:00-7:00 pm



The Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society is doing well and we received updates from all officers in attendance as well as discussed our recent projects such as the new \$500,000 traditional grant, and an upcoming membership drive! We also discussed some logistics around upcoming events such as brush cut days, and this year's Double Gun Shoot. There were no motions or action items voted on at this board meeting.

In memory of Cliff Steinhauer

Information provided by [Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society](#) and [Obituary](#)

The prairie grouse enthusiast and conservationist community lost a good man this October, as long time sharp-tailed grouse and prairie chicken champion, Cliff Steinhauer passed away surrounded by his loving family. He enjoyed the Thief River Falls Area and was active in his community where he served on the Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society board, Holt Township board, and Agassiz Audubon board for 16 years. He was also very active with the Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society. He enjoyed tending to his vegetable gardens, hunting, farming, and even raising several grouse species, which he would bring to Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society events for the members to enjoy! We, MSGS, send our condolences to Cliff's family, and to the members that got to know him.



Photo of Cliff Steinhauer volunteering with the MN DNR Western Prairie Fringed Orchid Surveys



Member Spotlight – From our kitchen to yours!

Provided by: Dave Pauly

This recipe was provided and tested by Dave Pauly, MSGS's Honorary Director at-Large and Habitat Coordinator! Recommended for Pheasant, Grouse, and turkey. **Thank you Dave for sharing your recipe with us!!**

Instructions:

1. Mix marinating sauce together in the container you want to use to marinate the meat.
2. Clean the bird and then spread the marinating sauce evenly on both sides of the bird
3. Lay ginger shreds (or wild mushrooms are great with dark meat) and green onion shreds over the bird and let marinate for 30 minutes.
4. Place in steamer (can use the steamer on a electric rice cooker) and steam for 20 minutes or until it is soft (can easily insert a shop stick in it).
5. Transfer out of the steamer and cut into chunks of whatever size you prefer.
6. Decorate with green onions or your choice of foraged greens (ramps, asparagus, etc.)
7. Serve it on a bed of wild rice, jasmine rice, cellophane noodles, or Raman noodles.

Dipping Sauce Instructions:

1. Heat 1 tbsp. of sesame oil in saucepan and stir fry chopped garlic and green onions until aroma.
2. Add in oyster sauce light soy sauce and water and mix well and bring all contents to a boil.
3. Transfer into a dipping bowl and let cool.

Ingredients:

- Half of a whole bird (~1.5 pounds)
- 1tbsp. Ginger shreds
- 1 tbsp. Green Onion shreds (white part of the onion)

Marinating Sauce:

- 1 tbsp. Light Soy Sauce (Recommended brand: Lee Kum Kee)
- 1 tsp. Chinese Cooking Wine
- 1/2 tsp. Salt

Dipping Sauce:

- 1 tbsp. Oyster Sauce (Recommended brand: Lee Kum Kee)
- 1 tbsp. Light Soy Sauce
- 4 tbsp. water
- 1 Garlic clove
- 1 tbsp. Chopped Green Onions
- 1 tbsp. Sesame Oil



A Celebration of Grouse & Prairie

The North American Grouse Partnership (NAGP)
cordially invites you to join fellow grouse enthusiasts for
an inspirational luncheon.

This special event will occur at **2025 Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic** in Kansas City, MO.

The following leaders will share how we can save ranching, grasslands, and prairie grouse:

Marilyn Vetter (PF and QF President/CEO)

Ryan "Cal" Callaghan (MeatEater Dir. of Conservation, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers Bd.)

Stacy Hoeme (Lesser Prairie-Chicken Landowner Alliance co-leader/rancher)

Ted Koch (NAGP Executive Director)

Sunday, March 9, 2025

Kansas City Convention Center, Room 2215 B

11:30 am Doors & Silent Auction Open

12:00 pm Lunch Seating

12:30 – 1:15 pm Program



www.grousepartners.org



Get your ticket by Feb. 21 by scanning the above QR code. Cost is \$65.

Hope to see you there!



Find details on NAGP's website under "What's New".

Grass-raised beef sandwiches will be featured
and fundraising items available.

Contact jodie@grousepartners.org if questions.

Thank you to our Sponsors and Supporters!

They are providing hunting gear, art, books, falconry
hunts, lek viewing adventures, and more.



PYKE
UPLAND GEAR



New Article Series— “Member Spotlight”

We are starting a new article series for the MSGS Newsletter where we highlight articles written by members! The first installment of this article series was a recipe from Dave Pauly! We are asking any interested member to submit their favorite wild game recipes, conservation stories, biographies of their favorite dogs, or any other outdoors-related article! If you are interested in submitting an article, please email it to Joe Quehl at joseph.o.quehl@gmail.com and we will feature it in the newsletter. Thank you in advance to any member who submits an article!



Thank you to everyone for supporting the Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Society and being a member! If you need to renew your membership or want to become a member visit our website at www.sharptails.org .

Also to stay up to date on MSGS Events and updates follow us on Instagram and Facebook!



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