

Lynx talking points

March 18, 2019

History with this lynx

- On March 16th the DNR was contacted about a potential lynx in Sanilac County that was depredating a farmer's domesticated geese.
- The farmer indicated that the lynx was easily approachable and wasn't spooked by his presence. This may be an indication the animal was raised in captivity at some point.
- Since the lynx was reportedly behaving oddly, the DNR and USFWS decided to capture the lynx to allow for an evaluation of its health.
- The DNR worked collaboratively with a local trapper to capture the lynx and it was caught the next morning - the morning of March 17th.
- The DNR has authority to handle federally threatened species via their Cooperative Agreement with the USFWS.
- The Lynx was transferred to a rehabilitation facility on the morning March 18th
- The landowner thought they saw a second lynx, but that is still uncertain. Additional monitoring will take place this week to determine if a second lynx exists.

History of lynx in Michigan

- The Canada lynx is a species adapted for hunting its primary prey, the snowshoe hare, in the snowy boreal spruce-fir forests of the north (mainly in Canada and Alaska).
- The best available information continues to suggest that resident lynx did not historically and do not currently occur in Michigan and that historical and potential future occurrences of lynx in Michigan most likely represent occasional dispersing lynx.
- In the Lower Peninsula, historical verified lynx records are exceptionally rare. There was 1 killed in Washentaw County in 1842 and 5 trapped along the Au Sable River in Oscoda County in 1917.
- Somewhat more common on the UP, where there were 38 verified records as of 1999 (most recent in 1983); however, even among these, at least 25 (66%) were likely related to irruptions, including 16 that were trapped from 1960-1962 (12 trapped in 1962 alone!) during the first of 2 successive unusually large irruptions from Canada into northern tier states.

Next steps

- Make sure animal is healthy and will undergo a thorough evaluation
- Evaluate whether or not there is evidence of habituation
- Collaborate with USFWS on future direction for this lynx