



**Quality Deer Management Association
Michigan Chapter
Press Release
April 24, 2006**

The Michigan Chapter of the Quality Deer Management Association announced that it has given a Lifetime Achievement Award to John Ozoga of Munising, Michigan for his outstanding contribution to whitetail deer research and deer management principles.

“John Ozoga is one of the finest whitetail deer biologists in the world and we thought it was appropriate that QDMA recognize him for the more than four decades he has studied and written about whitetail deer,” said Leon E. Hank, Michigan’s QDMA President. “John is a hero to us because he has been a strong advocate for science and research-based deer management principles. He’s recommended that we change our deer management principles so we have a more age and sex balanced deer herd in the state – like nature intended. We think those are the principles that the clear majority of Michigan hunters support.”

Ozoga accepted the award Saturday, April 22, 2006 in Munising at the State Chapter QDMA member’s meeting. QDMA held the meeting in conjunction with a member’s meeting of the Superior Deer Management branch of the QDMA.

Bob Garner, a long-time board member of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission recalled that John Ozoga was an outstanding communicator on technical deer management subjects. “John was the best biologist that I ever knew for taking pure research and converting it to examples that the public could understand. I count the hours I spent with John Ozoga as some of the best for understanding whitetails.”

Ozoga retired from the Department of Natural Resources with more than 30 years of service to the State of Michigan. He spent most of his career at the U.P.’s Cusino Wildlife Research Station in Shingleton, Michigan. He also published over 50 peer reviewed articles on deer research in the Journal of Wildlife Management and the Wildlife Society Bulletin. Ozoga has also written a number of books on the whitetail deer and continues to write columns on deer research and deer behavior for major outdoor and hunting magazines.

Ozoga and his research partner, Lou Verme, were the premier whitetail deer research team in the country when they ran the Cusino Wildlife Research Station.

In his acceptance speech, Ozoga urged QDMA members to keep pressure on deer management decision-makers to ensure that there are adequate long-term plans in place to improve winter habitat for UP and northern Michigan deer. “We should have a 20 year plan for improving our winter habitat and we do not,” Ozoga stated in urging QDMA to do more for long range management planning.

“John Ozoga still lives in Munising and he is known around the U.P. and the country as a common sense biologist who truly understands deer and how to manage them,” said Jeff Sturgis,

President of the SDM QDMA Branch. “Our members respect him as someone who has always looked out for the welfare of the UP’s deer herd.”

The QDMA has almost 40,000 members nationwide and 3,500 members in Michigan, including over 400 members in the U.P.’s Superior Deer Management branch.

(For further information, please contact Leon Hank at 517-699-2393 or Jeff Sturgis at 906-573-2842).