



## MATTERS OF OPINION



**Terry Steinwand**  
*Director*

Summer is finally here and most, if not all, of the state has received some much needed precipitation. This is truly a wonderful time to be outdoors in North Dakota.

Prairie flowers are blooming, bringing a rainbow of colors to native prairies. Pheasant roosters are still crowing in hopes of attracting a late season mate. Waterfowl broods are beginning to appear in all of their “fuzz ball” wonder. And fawns are being secreted away from predators. These and other wonders of nature are a tribute to the place we call home.

The spring weather was relatively cool and fishing was what I would have to call sporadic. I’ve heard some great fishing reports from some areas and some fair reports from areas I thought should provide pretty good action. While the larger waters tend to attract the most attention, let’s not forget about the smaller gems in North Dakota, as they can provide great fishing at times.

Garrison Dam Tailrace is one of those waters that receives its share of attention, mostly for walleye. There was a stretch in late winter or early spring that the walleye fishing was nothing short of phenomenal. I was at the Tailrace during the fishing frenzy, but, unfortunately, I didn’t have the time to wet a line. I did watch a dozen fish get caught, by anglers from boats and from shore, during my short stay.

Walleye certainly aren’t the only fish available in the Tailrace. Trout and other

fish species add to what is certainly a diverse, celebrated fishery. In this issue of *North Dakota OUTDOORS*, we take a closer look at this stretch of the Missouri River’s trout fishery that produces fish of more than 20 pounds, yet is often overlooked.

While the amount of water behind Garrison Dam is an unending concern, so too is the case on North Dakota’s prairies. Waterfowl brood success will likely be negatively influenced by the number of dry wetlands across the state. Add that to the substantial loss of Conservation Reserve Program acres in some areas of the state, and the future for ducks is not as bright as in years past. The large number of CRP acres we’ve had in the state for the last 20 years have been a boon for duck production, allowing North Dakota to produce its fair share of ducks.

Reduction in CRP will undoubtedly affect fish and wildlife populations in the state, as well as increase use on public lands. Some of these lands include our wildlife management areas, which are owned or leased by the state specifically for wildlife production and hunting purposes. And we do what we can to make them as productive and accessible as possible.

Enjoy summer, as it will provide more opportunities to get outdoors to fish, camp, or simply take a hike across the prairie. I’m guessing you won’t be surprised at the bounty of natural resources in our state.

*Terry Steinwand*