

NORTH DAKOTA  
**OUTDOORS**

PUBLISHED BY THE NORTH DAKOTA



GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

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## MATTERS OF OPINION



**Terry Steinwand**  
*Director*

This month, for the first time, many North Dakota anglers will find themselves adapting to a new rule that requires draining of boat livewells and baitwells upon leaving the water.

While the rule actually took effect last October, by that time most of us had stored our boats for the fall. This spring, many popular fisheries were still covered in ice the last week of April, so that first outing is perhaps still in the works.

Whenever that first trip happens, you can no longer transport fish in a livewell containing water from a boat ramp to your home, cabin or camper. We've talked about this new rule for well over a year now and most anglers in the state support the concept of minimizing the potential for transfer of water containing ANS, from one body of water to another.

Still, new regulations tend to generate varied questions and our Both Sides this month has answers to a variety of those. Take a look for a refresher on all our regulations designed to slow the spread of ANS, and also learn more about the details of the new livewell rule.

The North Dakota Legislature meets every odd-numbered year and the 2011 session was a relatively light one for bills dealing with Game and Fish matters. We spent a fair amount of time working with legislators on our agency budget bill, which eventually turned out close to what Governor Dalrymple submitted.

The other bill that warranted extra attention was SB 2227, which wound up providing more options for Game and Fish responses to deer depredation in winters like the one we just experienced.

This issue also has a summary of all the bills the Game and Fish Department tracked during the session. It's not a long list, but it has some interesting items.

We usually do our agency annual review in January's magazine, but this year we're able to provide a much more up-to-date enforcement report. For instance, last year in the January 2010 magazine, we compiled the well-read listing of citations that occurred in the fiscal year from July 2008 through June 2009, which meant the hunting season statistics featured were more than a year old.

A new record-keeping system is allowing us to narrow the gap a bit. While the enforcement review is a couple of months later than in the past, the statistics are more current, and we're just beginning to learn how this deep statistical information can enhance our law enforcement effort.

Our May magazine also features a report on the status of forage fish within the Missouri River and lakes Sakakawea and Oahe, and a promotion for our Becoming an Outdoors-Woman summer educational program.

Over my career as a fisheries biologist and then agency director the last five-plus years, I've seen the forage bases, primarily smelt, on these two reservoirs boom and bust a couple of times. High water is usually good, and that's where we're at now – and forage populations on both reservoirs are headed in the right direction.

And as an old fish guy, I'd be remiss not to give a pat on the back to our spring fish spawning crews. Two heavy snow events took place right in the middle of northern pike spawning efforts on Lake Oahe. Bad roads and icy temperatures didn't stop the pike from their spawning run, and our crews worked right through the weather to collect all the eggs needed to meet stocking requests.

Here's hoping May is a lot nicer than April and we can all get out and enjoy our great outdoors without wearing a parka.

*Terry Steinwand*

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# ANS Rules Questions and Answers

More than two decades ago, the State Game and Fish Department intensified its effort to curtail movement and introduction of unwanted fish species. In recent years, that effort expanded to include unwanted aquatic vegetation, and today, anglers and boaters are adapting to a new provision of law meant to more effectively prevent water transfer from fishing lake to fishing lake.

New rules regarding legal baitfish have noticeably reduced unwanted introductions of white suckers and carp into clean fishing waters. Requirements adopted in 2008 have almost certainly slowed the spread of invasive aquatic weeds like curly leaf pondweed and Eurasian water milfoil. Tightening of water transport rules is intended to reduce potential spread of other aquatic organisms like zebra mussels and VHS disease.

The basic terminology for recent ANS rules is simple:

- **INSPECT** – watercraft and other equipment.
- **REMOVE** – all vegetation from watercraft and other equipment.
- **DRAIN** – all water from livewells, bilges and other holding structures.

Removing vegetation and draining water are now required before leaving a water body, whether you're

boating or shore fishing. Just about every boat ramp in the state features the "Inspect, Remove, Drain" sign as a reminder.

While the concept is simple, the Game and Fish Department gets a fair number of questions regarding these new regulations, especially the most recent one that requires draining of livewells before leaving the water. Previously, anglers could retain water in their livewell to transport fish or bait.

Following is a summary of current ANS rules, and answers to a variety of questions the Game and Fish Department has received.

- All aquatic vegetation must be removed from boats, personal watercraft, trailers and associated equipment such as fishing poles/lures before leaving a body of water. That means "vegetation free" when transporting watercraft and equipment away from a boat ramp, landing area or shoreline.
- All aquatic vegetation must be removed from bait buckets when leaving the water.
- All water must be drained from boats and other watercraft, including livewells, baitwells, bilges and motors, before leaving a water body.
- Live aquatic bait or aquatic vegetation may not be transported into North Dakota, and all water



CRAIG BIRNLE

*Common carp are probably North Dakota's most recognized aquatic nuisance species. Bait laws established two decades ago have helped reduce their spread into new waters.*

must be drained from watercraft prior to entering the state.

- Anglers may not transport baitfish in containers of more than 5 gallons volume, and any other fish species, including game fish, may not be held in water and/or transported in bait buckets/containers when away from a water body, or held in water in any container, such as a cooler, on shore, unless the water is from melting ice only.

### ***Why are ANS such a big deal?***

ANS can greatly degrade or ruin habitats and compete with native and/or desirable species for food and space. Not only can recreational fisheries suffer but so can industries and communities that rely on lakes or rivers for their water supply. Once established, the cost of controlling an ANS would likely far exceed the minimal costs required to keep from spreading it into or within North Dakota.

### ***Can ANS spread be stopped?***

Perhaps not stopped, but if everyone takes precautions and complies with the rules, the spread can be controlled. But it requires everyone's participation.

### ***How do I make sure I'm doing the right thing?***

To comply with the regulations, you simply need to remove all aquatic vegetation from your boat, trailer, bait bucket, etc., when you leave the water body. You need to drain all water from your boat at the ramp site. Also, remember you cannot dump bait into a water body.

### ***Do I have to run my motor dry before I leave a lake?***

No. The amount of water in the motor's cooling system is so minimal that it holds a small risk of containing ANS. As you exit a lake, lower the motor to let gravity drain the lower unit, then raise to transport. Also inspect the intake screen to make sure it is free of aquatic vegetation.

### ***Can I drain water from my boat anywhere?***

No, you must drain the water (pull all plugs, etc.)



*Signs like this one are posted at nearly all access points in the state as a reminder to boaters to inspect their watercraft, remove vegetation and drain all water before leaving the ramp area.*

back into the water (immediate area) from which it originated. This must be done at the ramp or adjacent parking lot before you leave.

### ***Why can I no longer keep fish alive in water in my livewell when I trailer my boat home?***

ANS can include small plant fragments or seeds, microscopic animals and viruses or diseases. If ANS exist in a water body, whether known or not (many are unseen with the naked eye), and water is pumped into a livewell, these problem species are then potentially present in the livewell water. If an angler fishes another body of water on the same trip, the ANS could be released into the new lake as water is pumped in and out of the boat.

Most individuals typically go straight home and do not fish another lake or river. However, if the livewell water is eventually drained into the local storm sewer system, it could run into a river or holding pond and become a problem in a new water body.

This concern is greatly elevated with the discovery of zebra mussels in the Red River. Compounding the potential problem is that Fargo/West Fargo and Grand Forks residents have approximately 10,000 licensed boats and many of these anglers fish both the Red River and Devils Lake and/or the Missouri River.

***I still don't fully understand the threat of retaining water in livewells/baitwells when I go directly home after fishing and clean my fish there.***

Although most people intend to go straight home, some boaters/anglers fish more than one water body in a day. Even if only 1 percent of anglers move from water body to water body, the threat for ANS movement increases dramatically as tens of thousands of gallons of water are transferred to new water bodies via the livewell.

***Why aren't these ANS regulations effective when you enter a water body versus when you leave?***

The goal of these rules is to greatly reduce the threat of ANS transport from water body to water body. The Aquatic Invasive Species Committee has identified this potential pathway as one of the highest risks of transport. Eliminating this risk/pathway at its source – i.e. the ramp site when watercraft leave a water body – provides the most protection by greatly reducing the risk.

If weed and water removal didn't occur until immediately before entering a new water body, then the potential ANS would be present at the ramp or along the shore and thus could easily find itself washed into a "clean" water body. Further, transportation of weeds and water could infest other water bodies as the vehicle and boat/trailer travel across the state's roads where ANS weeds, etc. could blow into uninfected water bodies along the roadway.

Likewise, ANS-infested water could be intentionally or unintentionally introduced into a new water body. Angler intentions and plans are always subject to change, thus addressing the problem at its source has the highest likelihood of success.

***If I can't use my livewell, how do I transport my fish home and keep them fresh?***

For fish transport away from a water body, the Department suggests placing your fish on ice in a cooler. As an old-fashion alternative, some older generation anglers have recommended placing the fish in wet gunny sacks, where they will usually remain fresh long enough to transport home or to a fish cleaning station.

***Can I put game fish in a 5-gallon bucket with water and transport them live?***

No; only legal bait and legal live baitfish can be

transported in water. Since fathead minnows are a legal live baitfish, there is no alternative other than to allow some water in bait buckets, to transport minnows for fishing. In the case of game fish, there are viable alternatives to transport them home or to a fish cleaning station, and they do not need to remain alive.

***When coming off the water, what is meant by "when out of water" as it applies to the ANS regulations that require all boats to drain water (including livewells) and be vegetation free?***

Obviously, some time is required to remove aquatic vegetation and drain water from a boat. Pulling plugs and removing vegetation should occur right on the boat ramp itself if/when these activities do not interfere with others who are waiting to use the ramp. When there is other traffic, the boater should pull into the immediate parking lot area and perform the mandated tasks, again attempting to stay out of the way of others.

In a few locations, fish cleaning stations are right next to the parking lot. In these situations, the boater can pull up to the cleaning station and perform the mandated tasks, IF not signed as prohibited (in some cases, the parking lots and fish cleaning areas are not paved and thus water should not be discharged as it will make the area muddy).

Legally, only the ramp, parking lot and immediate fish cleaning station are the areas for vegetation removal and pulling plugs.

***Do the same rules apply for tournaments?***

Absolutely. If a tournament has an approved live-release format, weigh-ins and fish releases will need to occur at the boat ramp site where boats launch and exit. Game and Fish will not allow an exception for tournament anglers to transport fish in livewells to off-site weigh-in stations.

***How then do I legally move my minnows from the bait shop to the lake and then back home?***

Transporting bait in a livewell/baitwell when out of water is illegal. However, transport of legal live baitfish and bait to or from a water body is still allowed via minnow buckets or other containers as long as they are 5 gallons or less.

***Why is it OK to transport minnows in up to 5 gallons of water in a bait bucket and move from lake to lake, but we can't use livewells when out of the water?***

Water in bait buckets remains a potential pathway for transporting ANS between water bodies, but eliminating the transport of water in bait buckets would essentially prohibit the use of any live baitfish in North Dakota. Allowing 5 gallons of water in bait buckets is a compromise between reducing the risk of transporting



CRAIG BIRRE

*It's not just fishing boats that require draining of all water. Personal watercraft (above) and pleasure boats are also included.*

*This bait provision only affects transport of bait, not keeping them alive at home, right? If a person keeps their bait alive at home, can they do it in a larger container?*

Yes. These rules apply to transport only.

*When at a boat ramp, where do I put the aquatic weeds I pull off my trailer and/or boat?*

Discard weeds along the shore, and/or in trash receptacles

ANS, while allowing anglers to possess enough water to keep their bait alive.

Allowing only 5 gallons or less for bait also greatly reduces the likelihood of ANS transfer compared to livewells, which commonly have 30 gallons of water. Also, the smaller volume makes it easier to visually inspect bait buckets for compliance with vegetation rules. Allowing minnow transport in bait buckets has been factored into a risk assessment, and at this time, Game and Fish has no plans to prohibit it.

***Why does it need to be a bait bucket capable of holding 5 gallons of water (or less) and not a cooler or other container that has larger capacity but contains only 5 gallons of water (or less) when transporting bait fish?***

A commercial bait bucket, which typically holds a gallon or two of water, or 5-gallon buckets, are by far the two most commonly used containers for transporting baitfish. Anything larger, even when only 5 gallons or less of water is present, is unacceptable, as measuring the volume of water in such large containers would present problems for game wardens in the field. Coolers of 5 gallons or less in volume are legal.

***What if three people are fishing together for the weekend. Can they combine all their bait together in one 15-gallon or 60-quart cooler?***

No, a container cannot exceed 5 gallons in volume, no matter how many anglers. The three anglers, however, could have three separate containers, each 5 gallons or less in volume.

(if available in parking lot). ANS regulations specify the removal of all aquatic weeds prior to leaving the immediate access area.

***What else can I do to help prevent the spread of ANS?***

You can disinfect your boat by adding hot water (110° F or warmer) to the livewell along with enough household chlorine bleach to reach a solution of 1 part bleach to 20 parts water. Run the recirculation pumps and use a brush (a toilet brush works well) to scrub under the lid and in the corners. Drain the solution in an appropriate location, not into a lake. Air drying can also be effective in preventing ANS transfer.

The livewell, bilge and equipment must completely dry, which may take a few days for the bilge. However, some ANS produce hardy seeds and eggs which can withstand extended periods out of the water; in these cases, air drying is not the answer. Power-washing can remove lake scum and unseen hitchhikers, such as small plant fragments or egg masses, from hard-to-reach places such as trailer frames and livewells. Use a commercial car wash that runs water through a sewage treatment system. If done at home, be careful that the wash water does not run down the street and into the storm sewer that empties into the local river or lake.

***What if I observe boats, trailers, jet skis, etc. that have weeds hanging from them away from a lake?***

The best thing you can do is spread the word on the risk of ANS. If the boat owner/operator is present and willing, ask that they clean the boat and trailer. If the owner/operator is not cooperative call the Report All Poachers line at (800) 472-2121.

*New laws take effect August 1, 2011, unless noted otherwise. More information on bills is available on the Game and Fish website at [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov).*

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2011

*By Greg Freeman*

ROM WILSON

State lawmakers finished the 2011 session in late April, 78 days after commencing in early January and two days short of the maximum allowed under the North Dakota Constitution.

Lawmakers considered just 25 bills regarding hunters, anglers and the state's natural resources, nine fewer than 2009 and the fewest in more than a decade.

Terry Steinwand, North Dakota Game and Fish Department Director, said lawmakers have worked hard on hunting and fishing issues over the years, and the relatively low number of conservation-related bills discussed this session is an

indication that lawmakers feel a balance has been reached. "There weren't as many contentious issues as we have seen in the past, but there was still a lot of work involved with many hours spent at the Capitol with lawmakers," he said.

While only a handful of bills were still open for debate on the final day, the Department's budget bill was one of them. "The House and Senate couldn't come to an agreement, so we were called back for 17 conference committee meetings, something we have never been involved with before," Steinwand said. "Although it may seem frustrating at times, you just have to have faith in the process.

We are pleased with the outcome."

## BILLS THAT PASSED

**HB 1180** – Landowner preferential elk licenses, established by governor's proclamation, will be issued by weighted lottery if the number of applicants exceeds the number of licenses available. Passed House 90-0. Passed Senate 47-0.

**HB 1181** – Lowers the minimum age to hunt pronghorn with a firearm from 14 to 12. Passed House 94-0. Passed Senate 24-22.

**HB 1188** – Establishes a minimum fine of \$100 for littering on any game refuge, lake, river, public park or recreation area. Passed House 74-19. Passed Senate 44-2.

**HB 1209** – A person convicted of a felony can petition the district court for restoration of the right to possess firearms. Passed House 76-17. Passed Senate 45-0.

**HB 1288** – Removes the sunset clause (July 31, 2011) from the 2009 law that clarifies a booking agent for an outfitter is not required to have a guide or outfitter license. Passed House 92-0. Passed Senate 47-0.

**HB 1380** – Defines eligible organization for charitable gaming purposes. Passed House 90-1. Passed Senate 33-13.

**HB 1393** – Establishes that a cross-bow is considered legal equipment for taking deer during the deer gun season. Passed House 80-12. Passed Senate 46-1.

**HB 1407** – Effective through July 31, 2013, nonresidents are allowed to hunt in Richland, Sargent, Benson, Ramsey and Towner counties during the early Canada goose season without counting



against their 14-day waterfowl license. The Game and Fish Department will track the number of resident and nonresident goose hunters and the number of geese taken by county, and report findings to legislative management by September 1, 2012. Passed House 67-26. Passed Senate 28-18.

**HB 1415** – The Game and Fish director may issue four any-deer licenses annually to the Wounded Warrior Project. These licenses are valid from the first day of youth deer season through the close of the deer season. Passed House 93-0. Passed Senate 47-0.

**HB 1452** – Provides landowner immunity for injuries to trespassers. Passed House 85-5. Passed Senate 47-0.

**HB 1454** – Allows the use of an artificial light while hunting beaver. Passed House 90-2. Passed Senate 37-8.

**SB 2017** – Appropriates \$65,687,742 for the Game and Fish Department for the biennium beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013.

**SB 2113** – Any individual who operates a motorboat or vessel in the state is deemed to have given consent, and shall consent, to a chemical test, or tests, of the blood, breath or urine for the purpose of determining alcohol concentration or presence of other drugs. Passed Senate 47-0. Passed House 92-0.

**SB 2227** – The Game and Fish director may authorize individuals with valid antlerless deer licenses to take deer on private lands severely impacted by deer (after other measures are deemed ineffective) from December 1 through January 15; provides for construction cost-share assistance for deer-proof hay yards to protect hay, feed and crops; works with livestock producers experiencing chronic deer depredation problems to develop site-specific deer depredation management plans; institutes an agricultural mediation service for landowners dissatisfied with the decision of the director; makes available \$1 million per biennium in the Game and Fish budget to provide wildlife feeding and other winter management practices on lands impacted by big game depredation;

makes available \$100,000 each biennium for food plots on private property for the purpose of providing winter feed; the director may authorize an individual to euthanize injured deer; and the director may authorize targeted deer reduction programs to alleviate deer depredation. Passed Senate 47-0. Passed House 94-0.

**SB 2352** – Prohibits a person from hunting through the Internet; hosting a hunt through the Internet; import, export or possess wildlife taken by a hunt through the Internet; or enable another person to hunt through the Internet. “Hunt through the Internet” means to hunt wildlife in real time using Internet services or any remote-controlled device to control actual firearms and to discharge live ammunition allowing a person who is not physically present to take wildlife. Passed Senate 43-2. Passed House 90-2.

**HCR 3019** – A concurrent resolution urging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to immediately cease wrongful denial of access and wrongful requirement of payment for the natural flows of the Missouri River. House adopted. Senate adopted.

**HCR 3032** – A concurrent resolution directing legislative management to study the needs of, economic values of, and methods to improve access roadways to recreational, tourist and historical sites in North Dakota. House adopted. Senate adopted.

**SCR 4002** – A concurrent resolution urging Congress to provide a legal process to return to the riparian landowner land controlled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers which is not necessary for authorized purposes and if the federal government is unable or unwilling to convey the land back to nontribal and tribal riparian landowners, then Congress shall convey the land back to the state of North Dakota. Senate adopted. House adopted.

## BILLS THAT FAILED

**HB 1237** – Would have allowed non-residents age 55 and older to purchase a nonresident senior citizen small game license for \$175 that would allow them to

hunt small game and waterfowl statewide for the entire season. Failed House 4-87.

**HB 1239** – Would have provided for an individual whose primary residence is located in the unit for which that individual is applying for a deer gun license, to receive one noncumulative bonus point in the deer gun lottery. Failed House 4-87.

**HB 1466** – If the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, through federal legislation, returns excess lands around Lake Oahe and Lake Sakakawea, the board of university and school lands may accept the land on behalf of the state of North Dakota. Passed House 93-0. Failed Senate 2-44.

**SB 2224** – Would have established a bounty of \$100 for coyotes until 2,000 coyotes are taken. Funding would have come from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services line item in the Game and Fish appropriation bill. Failed Senate 16-30.

**SB 2225** – Would have provided for a \$500 nonresident combination small game and waterfowl license that is valid for the entire season, except for the first week. Failed Senate 17-29.

**SB 2235** – Would have established a nonresident waterfowl license valid for three four-day periods. Currently the nonresident waterfowl license is valid for 14 consecutive days or two seven-day periods. Failed Senate 21-25.

**SB 2332** – Would have regulated hunting on big game preserves, including a person would not be required to possess a hunting license and a manifest would be required for transporting harvested animals. In addition, big game hunting preserves in operation before January 1, 2011 could have had less than 160 acres, with a minimum of 80 acres. Passed Senate 45-1. Failed House 33-59.

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*GREG FREEMAN is the Game and Fish Department's news editor. He tracked legislation daily during the 2011 session.*

A high-angle photograph from a boat looking down into the water. A person's legs in light blue jeans and a white shirt are visible on the left. A black metal frame of the boat is in the foreground. A white trawl net is being pulled through the water, with a yellow rope attached to it. The water is a greenish-blue color.

# Missouri River System

*Game and Fish  
Department fisheries  
biologists use trawls  
in summer on Lake  
Sakakawea to sample  
young rainbow smelt.*

# FORAGE

*By Ron Wilson*

Lakes Sakakawea and Oahe – two Missouri River System reservoirs separated by about 70 river miles – are seldom on the same page it seems.

In the late 1990s, for example, when Oahe's rainbow smelt population crashed, leaving little for walleye and other predators to eat, Sakakawea's walleye population was thriving thanks to a healthy forage base. Today, while forage conditions are good in both reservoirs, the composition of the forage base has changed, especially in Lake Oahe where gizzard shad have nearly vanished.

In Sakakawea, smelt have recovered well following years of drought. The lake fell to a pitiful 1,805 feet above mean sea level in 2005, but climbed 46 feet by 2010 following the arrival of much needed precipitation.

“Not only have the smelt rebounded in Sakakawea, other forage fish species such as yellow perch and spottail shiners are also abundant,” said Dave Fryda, North Dakota Game and Fish Department Missouri River System supervisor. “You don't need to look any further than the condition of walleye and other game fish in Sakakawea to see how the forage has improved dramatically.”



MIKE ANDERSON

*With an increase in forage in Lake Sakakawea, the walleye bite could be challenging in 2011.*



MIKE ANDERSON

*While similar in appearance, these forage fish – white bass (top) and gizzard shad (bottom) – are altogether different. Even so, when found in abundance in the Missouri River System below Garrison Dam, both are prey for larger game fish species.*

Just a few years ago, body condition of walleye, sauger and northern pike was the poorest since rainbow smelt were introduced in 1971, Fryda said. The smelt population had declined so much that fish condition reflected a fishery totally lacking its primary forage base.

“On Oahe, forage conditions are still good despite the virtual extirpation of gizzard shad,” Fryda said. “Shad are no longer the dominant warmwater forage in Oahe. Fortunately, other species such as yellow perch, white bass and crappies have had good reproduction in recent years, and at least for now are doing a good job of buffering the loss of gizzard shad. Smelt abundance is also decent in Oahe.”

Unlike Lake Sakakawea, Fryda said Oahe also has a good population of cisco. Cisco are present in

Sakakawea, but have never made up a significant portion of the overall coldwater forage base.

“The dramatic increases in water levels and three consecutive severe winters have caused these major changes in forage composition in the two reservoirs,” Fryda said. “Rising water levels inundated terrestrial vegetation and provided good spawning and nursery areas for a variety of warmwater forage species in both reservoirs. Additionally, higher levels dramatically improved coldwater habitat conditions on Sakakawea and the smelt population responded very well.”

The loss of gizzard shad is not surprising, Fryda said, considering the species’ temperature-sensitive nature. Shad are native to the Missouri River System in North Dakota, but likely only as seasonal residents that migrate south as water temperatures drop in fall. Severe drought and warmer winters during the early and mid-2000s allowed shad to survive the lean months and flourish.

“However, a return to harsh winters has confirmed predictions that shad would again decrease dramatically and perhaps be extirpated due to longer, colder winters,” Fryda said.

By 2003, shad were plentiful throughout most of Lake Oahe and by 2005 they were important prey for walleye as far upstream as Garrison Dam Tailrace. “Young-of-the-year shad annually became extremely abundant during 2005-08. However, following the

harsh winter of 2008-09, shad populations collapsed and no young-of-the-year shad have been documented by biologists during the last two summers,” Fryda said. “In 2010, biologists sampled one adult gizzard shad and South Dakota biologists sampled two adults. And neither agency sampled a single young-of-the-year shad from Lake Oahe last year.”

Even during years of high abundance, fisheries biologists did not document many adult gizzard shad in the North Dakota portion of Oahe and the Missouri River. However, young shad migrated into the state each summer and were plentiful by August.

“The extremely high abundance of shad often caused poor fishing during late summer because of the high availability of prey,” Fryda said. “With the absence of shad in recent years the fishing has not slowed as much during later summer and early fall.”

Missing for some time from Sakakawea is a strong year-class of rainbow smelt. Following three consecutive years (2006-08) of record low numbers, smelt started to rebound in 2009, Fryda said, and increased dramatically in 2010. “Overall smelt numbers are good, but total smelt biomass is still somewhat below levels of the late 1990s and early 2000s,” he said. “Smelt reproduction was good in 2010 and large numbers of young-of-the-year were entrained through Garrison Dam throughout late summer and fall.”

Recovery of the rainbow smelt population was also evident in the chinook salmon population. Anglers once again began routinely catching salmon weighing more than 10 pounds in 2010. The average size of salmon captured during fall spawning was the highest since 2001 at nearly 8 pounds.

Heading into spring, the ingredients for another successful smelt spawn in Sakakawea were seemingly in place. “Water levels and spawning substrate should be excellent for smelt spawning,” Fryda said. “Exceptional plains snowpack backed up with good mountain snowpack should result in rising water levels throughout the spawning season and into summer.”

Additionally, the spawning run will have a lot of large adult smelt that are in excellent condition, which improves the reproductive potential of the population, Fryda said. “As always, the weather during spawning can have a dramatic effect on reproductive success,” he said. “Smelt spawn in very shallow water and high winds can cause significant loss of smelt eggs to wave action and dewatering.”

With adequate forage and healthy game fish populations, fisheries biologists can address stocking rates. In Lake Sakakawea that means 4 million walleye and 200,000 salmon in 2011. “With fish condition and growth favorable again, increasing sport fish abundance will again be a priority,” Fryda said.

Overall, the fishing outlook is good. “On Oahe, anglers will begin to catch high numbers of small walleye from strong year-classes produced the last few years,” Fryda said. “Quality-sized fish are still abundant, but anglers will likely be sorting through more small fish. On Lake Sakakawea the increased abundance of forage and good condition in sport fish may again lead to a challenging walleye bite.”

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**RON WILSON** is editor of *North Dakota OUTDOORS*.

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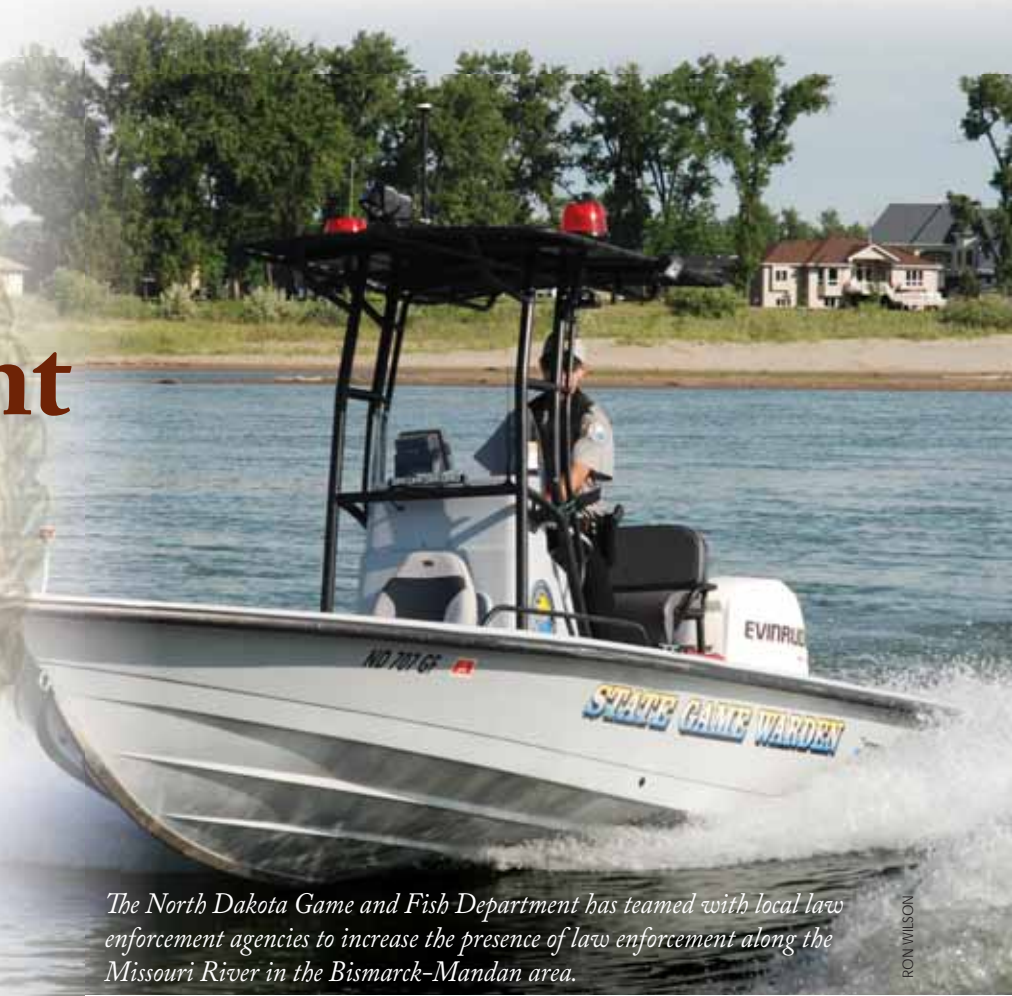
*Flooded vegetation along the Missouri River System has increased productivity and provided spawning habitat for forage fish and some game fish species.*



MIKE ANDERSON

# 2010 Enforcement Division Review

*By Robert Timian*



*The North Dakota Game and Fish Department has teamed with local law enforcement agencies to increase the presence of law enforcement along the Missouri River in the Bismarck-Mandan area.*

RON WILSON

**F**or many years, Game and Fish has reported a summary of violations in the January issue of *North Dakota OUTDOORS*. That summary was based on the fiscal year – July 1 through June 30 – so some of the statistics were more than a year old.

In October 2007 the enforcement division activated a new computerized records management system which allows everyone in the division, from game wardens in the field to the chief at Department headquarters in Bismarck, to enter and retrieve information immediately. So now we can easily generate an annual violation report based on a calendar year, and we're adding to that to provide a more comprehensive annual look at the Game and Fish Department's enforcement division.

While a more current violations

report is an indirect benefit, the goal of the new records system is to assist in improving overall enforcement operations.

With so much information and the enhanced ability to retrieve it, the challenge now is to determine what information has value with respect to improving allocation of time and resources.

When looking at the enforcement review for 2010, remember that the numbers are simply that, numbers. The citations in Burleigh (208) and Morton (93) counties in 2010 is a good example of this because if you only look at the total, which is relatively high, you don't see the entire picture.

As to why 301 citations were issued in the two counties combined is partly due to an increase in enforcement presence on the Missouri River in the Bismarck

and Mandan area. With the help of a legislative grant provided through the State Water Commission, a cooperative Missouri River Task Force was formed in 2009, which includes Game and Fish, the Burleigh and Morton county sheriffs' departments and Bismarck and Mandan police departments.

We will use the statistical information to tell us if we are doing all that we can, or if there are areas in which we can do better, and if so, we can then develop a plan and review the results to see if we are getting the desired outcome.

In the end, technology is just another tool to help us do our job. The system still depends on the integrity, ability and dedication of individual officers.

**ROBERT TIMIAN** is the Game and Fish Department's enforcement division chief.

# SUMMARY OF VIOLATIONS FOR 2010

## Big Game

Failure to accompany/transport other's game	4
Hunting in a closed season	1
Failure to wear florescent orange	7
Tagging violations	58
Exceeding limit	7
Killing wrong species or sex	8
Killing deer without a license	2
Purchased more than one big game bow license	1
Other big game violations	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>

## Small Game

Using gun able to hold more than 3 shells	80
Hunting in closed season	7
Illegal possession/taking	10
Exceeding limit	72
Unlawful transportation of game	2
Failure to leave identification or sex of game	93
Killing wrong sex or species	5
Failure to accompany/transport other's game	6
Wanton waste	12
Hunting in unharvested field	7
Nontoxic shot violation	11
Failure to HIP register	1
Hunting without federal waterfowl stamp	10
Exceeding limit	17
Hunting waterfowl in wrong zone	1
Other small game violations	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>354</b>

## Boating

Use of unlicensed or unnumbered boat	58
Failure to display boat registration	5
Operating without lights at night	30
Inadequate number of PFDs	169
No observer while towing skier	61
Reckless or negligent operation	5
Operating vessel under influence/intoxicated	21
Other boating violations	87
<b>Total</b>	<b>436</b>

## Fishing

Fishing with excessive lines	22
Exceeding limit	48
Fishing in closed/restricted area	7
Taking undersized/oversized fish	6
Failure to attend lines	5
No identification on fish house	1
Failure to remove fish house	6
Aquatic Nuisance Species violation	2
Paddlefish violations	7
Other fishing violations	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>

## Furbearer

Shining (using artificial light)	3
Illegal possession/taking	3
Hunting/trapping in closed season	1
Use of motor vehicle off established trail	12
Harassing furbearers with motor vehicle	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

## General

Use of motor vehicle off established trail	36
Noncriminal transportation	2
Harassing wildlife with motor vehicle	3
Hunting on posted land without permission	60
Hunting after legal hours	35
Wanton waste	5
Aid in concealment of unlawful game	3
Hunting in wrong unit/closed area	18
Loaded firearm in motor vehicle	128
Discharge of firearm within/on motor vehicle	5
Use of illegal firearm or bow	2
440 yard violation	19
Littering	39
Other general violations	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>369</b>

## Licensing

Failure to sign/affix stamp	10
Hunting/fishing/trapping without proper license	109
Failure to carry license on person	231
Gratis hunter off described land	2
Misrepresentation on license or application	57
Suspended license violation	2
Guide/outfitter without a license	7
Other licensing violations	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>425</b>

## Wildlife Management Areas/Refuge

Failure to obey posted regulations	9
Prohibited use of motor vehicles	10
Unlawful use of firearms	5
Littering/abandoning property	4
Unattended pets	1
Camping	7
Tree stand violations	1
Possession of glass beverage containers	1
Baiting on WMA	2
Possession/discharge of fireworks	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>

## Miscellaneous

Possession of controlled substance	7
Possession of drug paraphernalia	7
Open container	21
Minor in possession	93
Criminal trespass	14
Other miscellaneous	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>

# TOP THREE CASES OF THE YEAR



Each year the North Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society, an organization of professionals in the wildlife field, gives an award for the top enforcement case of the year. The award honors Chuck Pulver, a chapter member and North Dakota Game and Fish Department warden who died of a heart attack while on duty in 1995.

The following are the top three cases submitted for consideration. Eligible submissions were those cases finalized between December 1, 2009 and November 30, 2010. All three cases were generated by calls from private citizens.

## Chuck Pulver Memorial Case of the Year

On October 29, 2008 Game and Fish Department warden Brent Schwan received a phone call about a dead deer north of Charlson, North Dakota. Upon investigation, Schwan found the head of the deer was missing and removed in a manner so it could possibly be mounted.

Schwan also found a black beanie cap and a pair of gloves at the scene, but he could not find the bullet that killed the deer or any shell casings.

Schwan later received an email with a photograph showing a young man holding a large whitetail buck with no tag on the antlers as North Dakota law requires. The email also included a second picture from a trail camera, provided as a comparison. Because the buck's antlers featured some odd tines, Schwan knew it would be recognizable.

A few weeks later, Schwan received another photo via email, showing the same young man and the deer, this time with a tribal reservation tag on it. The subject line on the email provided a possible name of the male in the photograph.

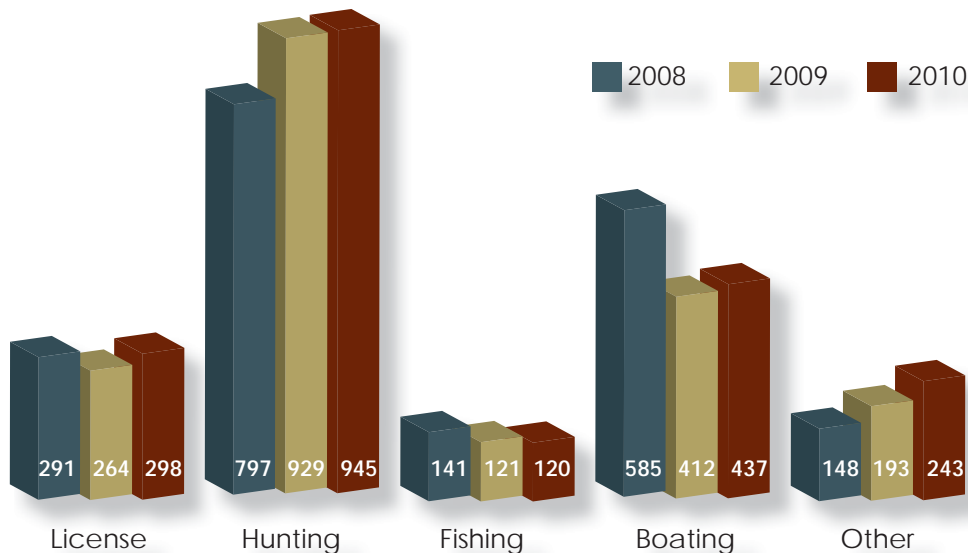
Using the name, Schwan searched the North Dakota Criminal Justice Information Sharing System where he found a driver's license photo that matched the person in the photographs.

In March 2009, Schwan submitted the black beanie cap and gloves to the North Dakota Crime Lab for DNA recovery. In October 2009, lab officials reported that they could test the DNA and requested samples from suspects.

In March 2010, Game and Fish officers secured search warrants for two different residences and for DNA samples, and located the antlers and several computers that were searched for photographic evidence. Several interviews followed to determine the timeline for when the deer was killed and who was involved.

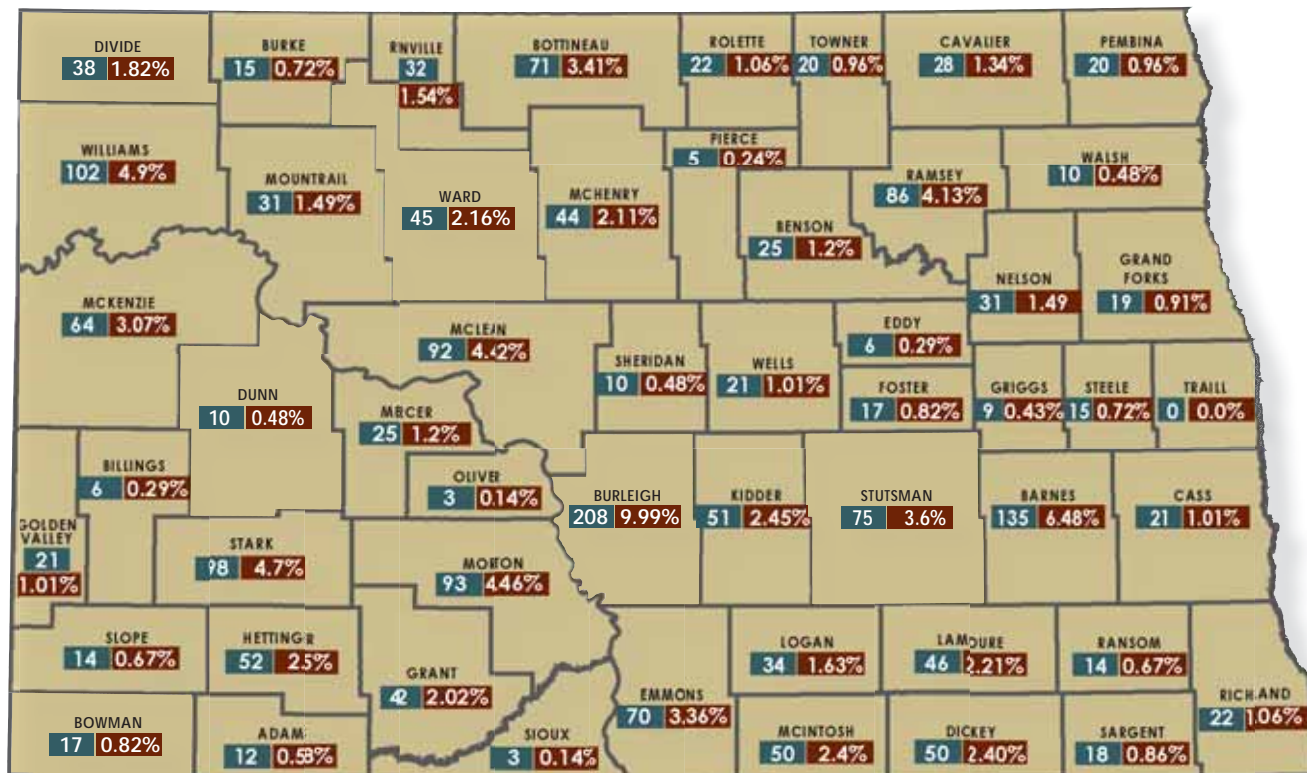
In May 2010, North Dakota Crime Lab officials confirmed that the primary suspect was a DNA contributor to the samples taken from the cap and gloves. He was charged through juvenile court with illegal possession and taking of big game, hunting big game without a valid license and wanton waste. During court proceedings, the suspect admitted to the charges and acknowledged the loss of hunting privileges until he is 21.

## CITATIONS BY CODE TYPE COMPARISON





## 2010 CITATIONS BY COUNTY



Citations per County    % of State Total Citations  
 County Unknown: 15    0.72%

### Case 2

During a two week span in spring 2009, Game and Fish Department warden Josh Frey received a number of reports of deer shot near Willow City, North Dakota.

During his initial investigations, Frey found at least six dead deer along the highway. He was able to recover an intact .270-caliber bullet from the chest cavity of one deer, along with four .270 shell casings on the roadway and shoulder. With this evidence, teamed with tips from the public, Frey linked two high school students to four of the dead deer.

An 18-year-old and a 17-year-old were charged with two counts each of illegal possession and taking of big game. The 18-year-old pleaded guilty and had to pay \$1,150 in fines and fees, lost his hunting privileges for one year, was instructed to retake hunter education and had to forfeit his rifle. The disposition on the 17-year-old was unavailable because it was sent to juvenile court.

### Case 3

On November 24, 2009 a Morton County landowner heard a rifle shot at 2 a.m., and went outside his home to see if he could determine what was going on. He didn't find anything, but went back out when it was light enough to see, and eventually found a freshly killed whitetail buck, though the deer gun season was closed at the time.

The landowner reported the incident at 8 a.m. North Dakota Game and Fish Department warden Jeff Violett responded and took note of the evidence, including two different tire tracks from the same vehicle. Violett then put a radio transmitter in the deer and marked its antlers for later identification, leaving the buck where it was killed.

Sometime between then and November 26, the likely suspect returned to the deer and removed its head. With the assistance of a Game and Fish Department pilot, the search for the transmitter led to a residence in Mandan.

Violett obtained a search warrant for the residence and located the suspect, who admitted to killing the buck. He was charged with illegal possession/taking of big game and shining wildlife, and paid \$1,285 in fines and fees.

*It dawned on me one day last summer that my 6-year-old son, Timothy, had already caught more fish than I had in my lifetime. I couldn't even remember my last fish. I was determined to change that.*

# GETTING HOOKED ON

*By Brenda Kadrmas*



**T**hough our family was fishing more often and Timothy couldn't get enough of it, my fishing knowledge was pretty minimal. Oh, I could cast and put a worm or minnow on a hook, but I didn't know things like what size of hook to use or what type of knot to tie. I needed and wanted to learn more.

I knew about the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman summer workshop, and for several years I thought about attending, but always came up with an excuse. Looking back, the worst one was thinking I'd probably be the only woman who wouldn't know what she was doing.

## No More Excuses

The Game and Fish Department first held a Becoming an Outdoors-Woman summer workshop in 1995.

The set-up includes classes on Friday afternoon, Saturday morning and afternoon, and Sunday morning, and in recent years Game and Fish has offered more than two dozen class options.

I was always curious about how to fly-fish, so I registered for two fly-fishing classes, plus kayaking, and general fishing.

Eight of us participated in the first "Intro to Fly-Fishing" session. Our instructors, Rich and Tim, patiently answered all our questions and filled our heads with a whole new vocabulary of fly-fishing terms before we headed to the shoreline of Lake Metigoshe to practice casting.

Some women learned the casting technique quickly and moved on to tying flies. I didn't do so well at first. My line tangled frequently and I lost most of my flies. But I didn't feel all that frustrated because other women were also having trouble and we kind of all worked through it together.

I got the feeling, though, that if I was the only one who didn't catch on, the instructors would have worked with me as long as necessary to make sure I was successful.

I did start to wonder, however, how my next class – fishing from a float tube – would go. Casting a fly while standing on shore was one thing. Repeating the process while suspended above the water in a floating device had a different set of challenges for me and the other two women taking the class.

Backing into the water with a float tube around your waist, wearing waders and flippers or swim fins, is not fashionable or graceful, but the three of us in the class managed to get in the water. Then I had a hard time steering the tube, and Tim needed to rescue me a few times.

Once I learned to control it, however, I found that propelling a float tube was relaxing and a workout at the same time.

Because the class was small, I got more help with my casting technique. Though I never quite perfected it, I felt good about making improvements.

That didn't help me catch any fish, but I really enjoyed fishing because I felt more confident with my casting and I liked moving around in the float tube.

When I learned the general fishing class was full, I decided to take another float tube class and this time I caught three fish. They weren't whoppers, but we were practicing catch and release anyway, so I let each of them go after a few photos.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY AUTHOR

*BOW  
participants  
kayak on the  
waters of Lake  
Metigoshe.*



I didn't think I would get so hooked on fly-fishing (excuse the pun), but I thoroughly enjoyed it. I was surprised to learn that flies are not live insects, and that you can fish in any type of water, for any type of species. It's not just fishing for trout on a pristine stream.

Before deciding to attend the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman weekend I hadn't really considered fly-fishing, and in a different environment without such concentrated, patient instruction, I might have given up after the first tangled line. But that's what's so nice about the weekend. The classes are actually relaxed and not something to fit in between other time commitments.

By the time I left I wasn't a pro by any means, but I now know people who can help me, including instructors Rich and Tim, who are in the Missouri Valley Fly Fishers Club, as is one of the women in the class.

### **On to Kayaking and Other Options**

While the float tube fishing went well, kayaking was tough. With the float tubes we mainly stayed in a protected area, but with kayaking we had to fight the wind and I got tired. I enjoy kayaking in calm water, but prefer canoeing for a longer trip.

Even though it was tough, I was glad I signed up for the class because, like float tube fishing, I would not have done it otherwise.

In addition to the classes, one of the instructors put together an extra geocache hunt. You could find the

cache by using a GPS device that BOW provided, or by looking for clues.

Geocaching was something new for me, so I tagged along with my bunkmates. Another group started at the same time, but they just used the clues. Once I got over the learning curve, the GPS unit was simple to operate. Although we got a bit off course, we eventually found the cache, but had to laugh when we saw the other group had beaten us to it. So much for technology.

I also took part in an impromptu raccoon hunt. Imagine about 30 women with flashlights following a guy and three dogs down a dark path and then searching the brush for a treed raccoon. At least we thought the dogs had treed a raccoon, but it must have escaped.

Either way, it was an adventure, just like the rest of the weekend. I was glad I took part in the BOW workshop.

Some women came in groups, and others, like me, came by ourselves. While I tended to hang out with my bunkmates, I found I could visit with almost anyone by asking what classes they took and how it went. The atmosphere was friendly and noncompetitive, just like the brochure describes it.

And BOW doesn't have any fashion/beauty rules. The fashion styles varied from nice T-shirts with capris to complete camouflage outfits. Some women wore makeup and fixed their hair; others just stuck a cap on their head.



GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT PHOTO



PHOTO PROVIDED BY AUTHOR

*The author, Brenda Kadrmas, bought a fly-rod following last year's BOW weekend, and is looking forward to a great summer of fishing.*

Age isn't a factor either. For example, two of my bunkmates were partners in a treasure hunt class. Carol and Colleen could have been a mother-daughter pair. When I first met Carol, she said she thought she was the oldest one there, but no one treated her differently.

I would sign up for another BOW workshop in a heartbeat. I had great bunkmates and I likely would never have met them if I hadn't stayed in the bunkhouse.

Although next time I will bring earplugs.

**BRENDA KADRMAS** is a freelance writer living in Bismarck.

## 2011 BOW Programs Announced

In 2011, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department has scheduled four Becoming an Outdoors-Woman summer workshops.

A mini-workshop is set for June 3-5 at Turtle River State Park, Arvilla. Course offerings include archery, birding, campfire cooking, global positioning system, mountain biking, orienteering, fly-fishing and general outdoor skills.

Workshop fees of \$135 cover instruction in all sessions, program materials, use of equipment, all meals and lodging.

The 17th annual summer workshop is August 12-14 at Lake Metigoshe State Park, Bottineau. Participants may take several programs including archery, canoeing, field dressing big game, introduction to firearms, fly-fishing, kayaking, navigating outdoors, duck decoy painting, Dutch-oven cooking, global positioning system, plant identification, and tracking and trapping. Workshop fees of \$135 cover instruction, program materials, use of equipment, all meals and lodging.

Catfishing the Red River is set in Grand Forks August 27-28. Participants must have a valid fishing license, and will learn about identification, tackle, gear and techniques of fishing catfish in the Red River. Workshop fees of \$50 include instruction in all sessions, program materials and use of equipment. No lodging is provided.

A waterfowl hunting workshop is scheduled October 1-2 in Bismarck. Participants are instructed in firearm and waterfowl safety, shotgun shooting, waterfowl identification, water/field decoys and gear, and the techniques for decoying and calling waterfowl. October 2 will feature a mentored hunt.

Participants must possess a hunter education certificate, current hunting licenses and provide their own hunting clothing, boots or waders. Workshop fees of \$20 include instruction, program materials and use of equipment. No lodging is provided.

BOW workshops are designed primarily for women with an interest in learning skills associated with hunting, fishing and outdoor endeavors. Although open to anyone age 18 or older, the workshops are tailored primarily to women who have never tried these activities or who are beginners hoping to improve their skills.

To receive an information brochure and enrollment form, access the Game and Fish website at [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov), or contact Nancy Boldt, BOW coordinator, at (701) 328-6312; or email [ndgf@nd.gov](mailto:ndgf@nd.gov).



## BOW Facts

- Fifteen hundred women have taken part in North Dakota BOW workshops.
- North Dakota Game and Fish has sponsored 16 summer BOW weekends and eight winter BOW weekends.
- BOW is a national program, and women from any state or country can participate.
- Beyond BOW is a program where women can participate in a one-day class focusing on one specific subject. For example, waterfowl hunting in the fall.
- Women as young as 18 can attend.

# BUFFALOBERRY PATCH

By Greg Freeman, Department News Editor



## 2010 Deer Gun Season, Winter Aerial Population Survey Summarized

North Dakota deer hunters took approximately 67,000 deer during the 2010 deer gun hunting season. Overall hunter success was 64 percent, according to Bill Jensen, Game and Fish Department big game biologist.

Game and Fish made available 116,775 deer gun licenses in 2010, with more than 99 percent issued to hunters.

Hunter success for antlered white-tailed deer was 68 percent, and antlerless white-tail was 63 percent. Mule deer buck success was 68 percent, while mule deer doe hunters had a success rate of 70 percent.

Hunters with any-antlered or any-antlerless licenses almost exclusively harvest white-tailed deer. These buck and doe hunters each had a success rate of 64 percent.

Hunters drawing a muzzleloader license had a success rate of 46 percent, while youth season hunters had a success rate of 55 percent.

Jensen said significant snow cover this past winter allowed the Game and Fish Department to complete aerial deer surveys in all monitoring blocks and long-term study areas. The surveys took longer to complete than usual – all of January and February – due to poor weather conditions.

“Deer numbers in many parts of the state continue on a downward trend following three consecutive difficult winters,” Jensen said. “Coupled with an aggressive harvest approach on antlerless deer in units with deer numbers above management goals, this has resulted in a reduction in the deer population in many, but not all, units.”

Aerial observations in units south and west of the Missouri River indicate white-tailed deer numbers remain stable to increasing, and mule deer numbers outside the badlands are stable.



RON WILSON



Application deadline for the 2011 deer gun and muzzleloader season is June 8. Applicants can access the Game and Fish Department's website at [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov) to submit a lottery application online, or to print an application for mailing. The online application feature should be active by about mid-May. Paper applications will also be available at Game and Fish offices, county auditors and license vendors. You can also apply by calling (800) 406-6409.

Large monitoring blocks in the northwest and north central portions of the state (3A1, 3A4, 2K1 and 2K2) have been stable to declining over the last three years, while the Cando area (2E) has shown declining deer numbers. The Wing-Tuttle (2J1 and 2J2) and Dawson (2I) areas show stable to decreasing deer numbers over the last three years.

Survey areas in the Red River Valley show decreasing to stable deer numbers in unit 2A, while units 2B, 2C and 2D show a stable to slightly increasing deer population.

Game and Fish staff flew the annual mule deer survey in April.

In addition to harvest rates and aerial surveys, the Department considers a number of other factors to determine license numbers, including deer-vehicle collision reports, depredation reports, hunter observations, input at advisory board meetings, and comments from the public, landowners and Department field staff.

## Bighorn Sheep Population Holding Steady

North Dakota's bighorn sheep population has remained stable despite three consecutive severe winters.

The 2010 annual bighorn sheep survey, which covers a period from April 2010 to March 2011, revealed a minimum of 283 bighorn sheep in western North Dakota, a 4 percent reduction from 2009, but still 3 percent higher than the five-year average. The northern badlands' population was down just 1 percent from last year, while the southern badlands' population, which has been struggling for several years, saw a 15 percent decrease.

In total, biologists counted 95 rams, 158 ewes and 30 lambs. There are also approximately 30 bighorn sheep in the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Game and Fish Department biologists count and classify all bighorns in late summer and then recount lambs in March to determine lamb recruitment.

Lamb recruitment was low at only 19

percent, which is well below average in North Dakota, said Brett Wiedmann, Game and Fish Department big game biologist. Sixty-seven percent of the lambs counted last summer survived the winter. "Due to deep snows that arrived in November, spring survey conditions this year were the most difficult we've had in many years," he said. "Herds were scattered and broken into very small bands, which made getting a complete lamb count nearly impossible. Consequently, we likely missed a few lambs as population modeling predicted 46 lambs instead of the 30 that were actually observed."

While lamb recruitment was low, the adult population remained stable. In addition, the ram-to-ewe ratio remained stable at 60 rams per 100 ewes.

"Although last winter's frigid conditions arrived early and stayed late, we only lost three radio-marked adult bighorns all winter," Wiedmann said. "It just goes to show how tough these animals are."

There were six bighorn sheep licenses issued in 2011, the same number as 2010.



### Bighorn License Draws Highest Bid

North Dakota's bighorn sheep license garnered the highest bid among states offering an auction license at the Midwest Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation annual meeting.

North Dakota's 2011 bighorn sheep auction license, which allows the winning bidder the rare privilege of pursuing a bighorn on a self-guided hunt, sold for \$41,000. An additional \$15,000 was dedicated to sheep management in North Dakota.

One hundred percent of the auction license proceeds are used to enhance bighorn sheep management in North Dakota.

## Department Tax Payments

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department recently paid \$464,835 in taxes to counties in which the Department owns or leases land. The 2010 in-lieu-of-tax payments are the same as property taxes paid by private landowners.

The Game and Fish Department manages more than 200,000 acres for wildlife habitat and public hunting in 50 counties. The Department does not own or manage any land in Traill or Renville counties.

Following is a list of counties and the tax payments they received.

County	Tax Due	County	Tax Due	County	Tax Due
Adams	\$ 139.64	Grant	\$ 764.64	Ramsey	\$ 5,001.46
Barnes	4,229.51	Griggs	349.42	Ransom	1,187.95
Benson	2,988.86	Hettinger	2,905.76	Richland	14,978.23
Bottineau	4,097.00	Kidder	9,409.40	Rolette	18,157.86
Bowman	1,600.18	LaMoure	6,599.68	Sargent	12,502.92
Burke	653.92	Logan	1,301.07	Sheridan	57,913.67
Burleigh	28,957.08	McHenry	1,696.30	Sioux	386.82
Cass	6,043.79	McIntosh	6,719.68	Slope	1,464.38
Cavalier	21,068.47	McKenzie	28,781.27	Stark	240.35
Dickey	14,943.42	McLean	47,074.20	Steele	7,993.98
Divide	1,416.12	Mercer	11,928.34	Stutsman	6,739.95
Dunn	6,816.70	Morton	15,973.78	Towner	2,034.08
Eddy	3,329.43	Mountrail	9,815.21	Walsh	8,792.74
Emmons	3,036.10	Nelson	4,505.42	Ward	72.08
Foster	2,757.88	Oliver	2,325.06	Wells	39,239.50
Golden Valley	181.85	Pembina	14,717.35	Williams	6,888.19
Grand Forks	12,203.30	Pierce	1,911.82		

*North Dakota anglers are reminded that the state's free fishing weekend is June 4-5. That is the weekend North Dakota residents may fish without a license, except for paddlefish. All other fishing regulations apply. Refer to the 2010-12 North Dakota Fishing Guide for season information.*



JANICE VETTER

## NASP State Tournament Held, Continues to Grow

The number of students participating in North Dakota's National Archery in the Schools Program has more than doubled in one year.

Jeff Long, North Dakota Game and Fish Department NASP coordinator, said 295 student archers participated in the 2011 state tournament, compared to 143 in 2010. North Dakota's first NASP state tournament, which drew 71 student archers, was held in 2009.

"All total, 11,800 arrows were released during this year's state tournament," Long said. "I couldn't be happier with how this program has taken off in only a few short years."

NASP is a national program that helps schools incorporate archery target shooting into physical education curriculums. The Game and Fish Department provides grants to help schools purchase equipment.

The 2011 state tournament was held in March at the VFW All Seasons Arena in Bismarck.

The first-place team and top five boys and girls in each division qualified for the national tournament in Louisville, Kentucky, as did teams that achieved minimum scores set by NASP.

Griggs County Central and Medina claimed top honors in the team competitions. Middle (grades 7-8) and high school (grades 9-12) students from Griggs County Central won their respective divisions, while Medina students finished first in the elementary school (grades 4-6) competition. These teams received a trophy, five dozen arrows and \$2,500 in travel assistance if the school decided to send the team to nationals.

Overall male and female winners Nathan Hazard and

Shaylee Anadel of Griggs County Central received a plaque and a special edition bow. In addition, each will receive \$750 in travel assistance if they attend the national tournament.

Top individual honors in the high school male and female divisions went to Hazard and Amanda Young, Dunseith. Middle school honors went to Anadel and fellow Griggs County Central student Ben Halverson. The elementary student winner in the boys division was Cole Nelson, Burke Central, and taking top honors in the elementary girls division was Kayce Saxberg, Griggs County Central.

Also qualifying for the national tournament were: (high school boys) Lucas Nadeau and Mason Blacksmith of Dunseith; and Jacob Langlie and Kody Grandalen of Mayville-Portland-Clifford-Galesburg; (high school girls) Shayla Zaun, Tristin Johnson and Kayla Feiring of Griggs County Central; and Laura Wanzek of Barnes County North; (middle school boys) Kevin Heine and Jesse Iverson of Griggs County Central; Kesad Schmidt of Devils Lake Central; and Chase Conway of Westhope; (middle school girls) Deena Monson and Holly Salverson of Griggs County Central; Amy Landsiedel of Wing; and Lisa Buckhaus of Hankinson; (elementary boys) Evan Trolstad and Eric Salverson of Griggs County Central; Seth Bentz of Wing; and Michael McKenna of North Sargent; (elementary girls) Ashley Wolf and Samantha Staloch of Medina; Mya Steinwehr of Hankinson; and Morgan Ehnert of Devils Lake Central.





## Dwyer Paints Duck Stamp Winner

The graceful redhead duck, which inhabits the prairie wetlands of North Dakota, is featured as the 2011 Best of Show in the North Dakota Junior Duck Stamp Contest.

Joseph Dwyer, 17, Bismarck, titled his winning artwork "Peaceful Sunrise" to win the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sponsored event. A junior at Shiloh Christian School in Bismarck, Dwyer has participated in the contest for seven years, receiving four first place honors, two seconds and the 2011 Best of Show. His artwork was selected from 914 entries received from throughout North Dakota.

Dwyer's painting will represent North Dakota at the National Junior Duck Stamp Contest along with other state and U.S. territory entries. The winner of the national contest will have their entry made into a stamp sold for \$5, with proceeds supporting conservation education programs.

Mandy Marboe, 15, Dickinson, received Best of Show runner-up honors. Marboe entered an acrylic painting of a king eider titled "Proud and Pretty."

Other first place winners were Daniel Langlie, Fargo; Isaiah Lusby, Wahpeton; Kenzee Langlie, Fargo; Tate Wyman, Westhope; Megan Tichy, Tower City; Logan Lamoureux, Westhope; Kyler Kortgaard, Bottineau; Jason Schmidt, Dickinson; Daniel Honcharenko, Dickinson; and Scott Gordon, Dickinson.

The winning artwork will be exhibited throughout the state at national wildlife refuge events, zoos, shopping malls, Fargo Scheels, and other locations throughout the year.



*Joseph Dwyer*



*2011 Winner*

*Ben Callahan, Dickinson, ND*

*Age 10-13*



*Runner-up*

*Zachery Bristol, Stanley, ND*  
*Age 14-18*



*Runner-up*

*Carleen Christofferson, Tolna, ND*  
*Age 6-9*

## Recognizing Earth Day in North Dakota

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department once again celebrated Earth Day by sponsoring youth clean-up days on publicly-owned or managed lands.

Each member of a school, Girl Scout, Boy Scout, 4-H club or youth organization who participated in cleaning up public lands in spring received a specifically designed conservation patch.

Last winter the Game and Fish Department sponsored a contest for students ages 6-18 to design a North Dakota Earth Day patch. Winners receiving a pair of Leupold 8x25 compact binoculars in the three age categories were Carleen Christofferson of Tolna (6-9), Ben Callahan of Dickinson (10-13), and Zachary Bristol of Stanley (14-18). Callahan's design was chosen the contest winner, and was used on this year's Earth Day patch.

Groups participate in Earth Day clean-up projects in May, and are encouraged to take the following precautions to ensure safety: keep young people away from highways, lakes and rivers, and only allow older participants to pick up broken glass.

Interested participants are asked to contact Pat Lothspeich at (701) 328-6332 to receive a reporting form for their project.

# GAME AND FISH STAFF NOTES



Gene Van Eeckhout

## Van Eeckhout Honored

Gene Van Eeckhout, longtime district fisheries supervisor for the Game and Fish Department in Jamestown, was awarded an honorary life membership to the Great Plains Fishery Workers Association for demonstrating the highest standards of excellence and achievement in the fisheries field throughout his career.

Honorary life membership is the highest honor bestowed on an individual by GPFWA. To be eligible, an individual must have at least 20 years of service and made significant contributions to the association.




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# back cast

By Ron Wilson



The fish skull in the plastic zip-top bag is a mystery. Mostly intact, save for some tiny broken pieces the color of dirty snow, I don't know where it came from, or why on earth it's rattling around in a box of fishing and hunting odds and ends.

My family recently moved. Not far, one right turn and

maybe a mile from our home of more than a decade. So I've spent a lot of time of late going through stuff, reorganizing, finding misplaced items and trashing what should have been tossed years ago, the fish skull being one of them.

A missing squirrel call, as shiny as a new nickel and about the same size with a hole punched through its middle, turns up in the bottom of a tin camping cup with a handful of .22-caliber shells. From what I remember from the directions that came with it, the call mimics a young squirrel in distress, which prompts older squirrels to come running within shooting range. That may be true in the right hands and mouth, but it never worked that way for us. The only thing we ever called was attention to ourselves, which is not a good thing in the squirrel woods.

I nearly toss a 3-inch tip section of a homemade fly rod that I'm guessing is of



RON WILSON

no use to restoring the rod to its original order. I've threatened to repair it for years, but like a lot of things the task falls somewhere outside of my skill set.

Although the rod is 40 years old and casts like a broom stick in comparison to today's high-tech rods, I don't want to throw it. I want to lean it in a corner to remind me of the petulant rod-maker who loathed having a skinny, cross-eyed kid underfoot in his shop for long periods, but who nearly threw out a hip lunging for my newspaper route money when I paid for the thing. I also want to look at it and remember who broke the rod and when.

It was 2002 on French Creek in South Dakota's Black Hills. My oldest son, then 8, and I were bumming around the woods and rivers, sleeping in a tent, cooking our own meals and wiping hands on our pants, poking at campfires and fishing when I could convince him it was more

fun than looking at dead presidents, hiking, collecting rocks and watching a bored park employee work a gold pan in slow circles for the thousandth time that summer.

It was our first road trip together, a memorable time, highlighted by a number of things, including watching quietly from just yards away as a big-

horn sheep lamb suckled breakfast from its momma, and driving and hiking to the top of a fire tower lookout and feeling certain we could see home from there.

The rod tip snapped when my son rolled a rock on it while searching streamside for whatever his little imagination might consider a treasure. I was bummed, overreacted a bit, and he cried. It was the only blip in our road trip, but quickly mollified with a Rushmore raspberry ice cream cone that dripped down our fists and made our knuckles sticky.

As for the fish skull? Well, it remains an anonymous bit of flotsam that washed into our lives for reasons that escape me, and now is likely buried in the local landfill.

**RON WILSON** is editor of *North Dakota OUTDOORS*.

# A CLOSER LOOK

By Ron Wilson

**L**ike its name implies, the least chipmunk is the smallest of all chipmunks, weighing about as much as a ping pong ball.

The least chipmunk is found in the badlands and mixed forests in northeastern North Dakota. The Eastern chipmunk, the state's only other chipmunk, ranges in eastern North Dakota and north.

The least chipmunk is characterized by white and black stripes on its face and back, extending to the end of its tail. From the tip of its nose to the tip of its tail, this diminutive creature measures between 7-8 inches.

Spring is a busy time for this speedy mammal after a winter of stirring only occasionally to eat stored food in underground burrows. Breeding activity crests in April, followed by females producing a litter of 5-6 young. By mid-June, young venture outside the burrow. Two months after birth, young are on their own.

Active during daylight hours, the least chipmunk feeds

on berries, seeds, some green vegetation, and insects such as beetles and grasshoppers. Food is carried to known feeding stations – stump, rock or log – in roomy cheek pouches.

While not the biggest meal found in the wild, least chipmunks fall prey to hawks, owls, snakes and a number of four-legged predators. Depending on what's chasing them, they find protection by climbing trees, squeezing into rock crevices or down their well concealed burrows.

Burrows are excavated under tree roots, stumps and rocks. The burrow may dip down several feet and include a number of chambers to store food for the leaner days of winter. In all, the burrow may be yards long in total, running this way and that.

Passageway to the least chipmunk's home is only about 2 inches wide. It is difficult to

find, which is exactly how the builder planned it. During construction, dirt was carried in the chipmunk's cheek pouches and scattered away from the burrow to make the entrance less conspicuous.

Often, the chipmunk will permanently plug what served as the main entrance during the excavation process to throw off predators. Instead, two or more better concealed entrances are dug from inside to the surface.

Interestingly, the chipmunk leaves little trace of its passing, not so much as a discernable trail leading away or to its undisclosed entrances. To do so would put the pint-sized mammal in harm's way.

*RON WILSON is editor of North Dakota OUTDOORS.*



Least Chipmunk

PHOTOS BY CHRIS GRONDAHL

