



NORTH DAKOTA OUTDOORS

PUBLISHED BY THE NORTH DAKOTA

GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

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MATTERS OF OPINION



Terry Steinwand
Director

I can't remember a spring this windy. As I understand it, April is one of the windiest months of the year, but what we've experienced thus far seems to be over the top. Even so, when you compare it to the long, cold winter we endured, we should still appreciate the warmer weather.

Wind does tend to interfere with early season pike fishing, though. Just when you think you have a good spot picked out, the wind changes direction and the ice tends to blow toward the shore from which you're fishing.

Wind can also play a detrimental role when I'm working up new loads for my guns, as crosswinds tend to make it difficult to see if I've fine-tuned a load or just messed it up.

We're heading into what looks to be another good open-water fishing season. While I didn't get to experience ice fishing this past winter, I heard it was nothing short of fantastic. And we expect good fishing to continue into this spring and summer.

As I write this piece, Game and Fish Department fisheries crews are waiting for water temperatures to warm enough for walleye spawning, while having just finished collecting eggs from northern pike.

I can't thank the fisheries staff enough. Over the last couple weeks they've worked in some pretty dodgy and uncomfortable conditions to help provide the quality fishing opportunities North Dakota anglers have come to expect.

Just imagine fighting 40 mile per hour winds, water temperatures around 38 degrees, bundled up to protect yourself from the elements, and then lifting extremely heavy nets to empty them of fish. Fisheries crews put in

some pretty long days under difficult conditions, so next time you see one of those "fish guys," give them a big thanks. They deserve it.

In this issue of *North Dakota OUT-DOORS* you'll also find the annual review on our law enforcement activity across the state. I just spoke of the dangerous nature of spring spawning activities for our fisheries crews, but our wardens are in high risk situations on a frequent basis. They're well trained for this type of activity, but it can still be dangerous at times.

The public often thinks of game wardens as just going out and checking fishing licenses or catching poachers, but they are true law enforcement officers across the board. Game and Fish wardens receive calls for help from other law enforcement agencies across the state, and are always on call and quick to respond. They deal with domestic disputes, highway accidents and everything in between. Their main job is fish and wildlife law enforcement, but they are always ready to help out when and where they are needed.

Finally, this issue also contains information on the different applications that can be accessed or downloaded from the Game and Fish Department website. These are great tools, and even if I haven't fully used them, they're valuable for lots of people.

My recommendation is for everyone to get outside and enjoy spring in North Dakota. It might be a little windy at times, but there's still plenty to do, whether it's fishing, hiking the prairies, walking the dog, or just watching a great North Dakota sunset.

Terry Steinwand

NORTH DAKOTA OUTDOORS

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The mission of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department is to protect, conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for sustained public consumptive and nonconsumptive use.

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Front Cover

Spring turkey season runs well into May, and many hunters are hoping to lure in a big tom like this. *Photo by Mike LaLonde of Bismarck.*



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District warden Jackie Lundstrom, Bismarck, checks a hunter's license during North Dakota's upland game bird season.



ASHLEY SALWEY



2013 ENFORCEMENT DIVISION REVIEW

By Robert Timian



North Dakota in the last few years has experienced increases in both average income and population.

On the whole, the state benefited from this growth, but it does come with some costs and challenges in many walks of life, including the Game and Fish Department's enforcement division.

As the accompanying illustrations show, the workload for game wardens is increasing, and in some areas, this increase has been fairly dramatic. The illustrations also indicate decreases in some locations, but does this mean fewer violations and incidents occurred in those areas than before?

The answer in most cases is "no." With 28 district game wardens spread across 53 counties, it is necessary to prioritize duties, so not all areas receive equal coverage. It also means that while we continue to work on effectiveness and efficiency, there is a limit to what can be done with the current number of staff and resources.

So, what are some of the challenges and how are we working to meet them?

In the last few years, two new major challenges have emerged. First is aquatic nuisance species. Most of the species of concern are found in out-of-state waters east of North Dakota, which is also from where most of the state's nonresident hunters and anglers originate. Also, a fair number of our residents in eastern North Dakota travel back and forth to fish and boat in Minnesota and states farther east.

Consequently, while game wardens are on the lookout for ANS statewide, we have dedicated more time and resources in eastern North Dakota with check stations, targeting specific areas at specific times of the year.

In western North Dakota, the challenge is dealing with the rapid population growth, which consists of a significant number of short-term workers who are not permanent residents.

And then there is just meeting the "normal" workload, which includes providing a game warden presence in the field across the state. The average workload, of course, has increased over the years, with more and expanded seasons encouraging more outdoors participation over longer periods of time.

Enforcement of game-and-fish-related laws is our primary duty, but as a part of the law enforcement community, Game and Fish wardens receive and give assistance to other law officers within the state, especially when assistance is related to public safety.

This has always been the way of doing business, with officers helping each other when summoned,

regardless of agency or department, especially in areas away from major population centers where law enforcement resources are limited.

Over the years, Game and Fish Department wardens have assisted in murder investigations, search and rescue operations, escaped-criminal searches, traffic control and everything in between.

So what is Game and Fish doing to meet these challenges?

- Recognize the issues game wardens face in the field on a daily basis, and solicit their ideas.
- Prioritize allocation of resources afforded the Department's enforcement division.
- Work with states attorneys and judges to create an atmosphere of deterrence. No matter how much effort game wardens put into a case, how strong the case is, the states attorney is the linchpin between the officer and court. While sentences should be appropriate, they also need to have a deterrent effect.
- Provide Game and Fish administration with a realistic assessment of enforcement division needs and abilities to determine funding and manpower.
- Work with the public.

The bottom line is that we will continue to do the best we can with the resources we are given for North Dakota hunters and anglers and public in general.

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

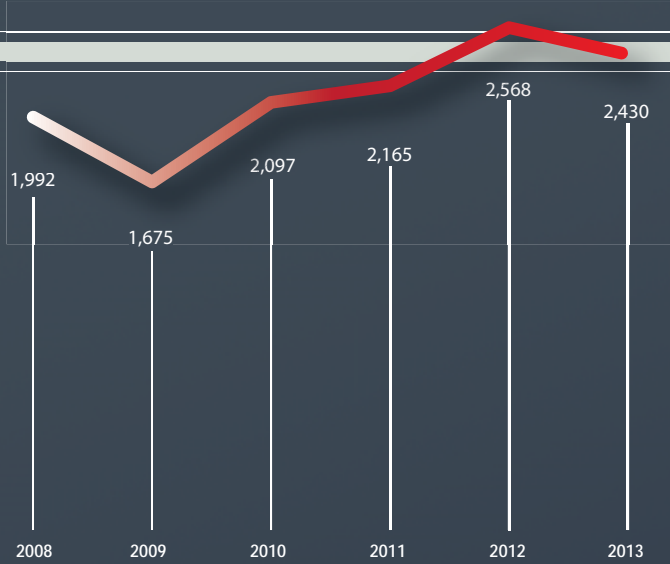


North Dakota Game and Fish Department wardens patrol the Missouri River, which is heavily used by pleasure boaters and anglers during open water months.



CITATIONS

STATEWIDE



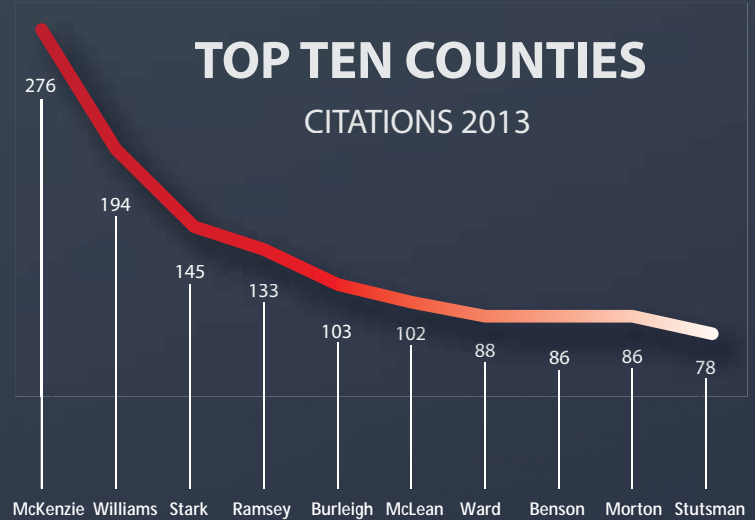
TOP TEN COUNTIES

INCIDENTS 2013



TOP TEN COUNTIES

CITATIONS 2013



CHUCK PULVER MEMORIAL CASE 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 is the top case of the year.

On February 23, 2013, Game and Fish Department warden Jerad Bluem requested aerial assistance from the warden pilot to check out the Horsehead Lake area in Kidder County. The pilot radioed Bluem that snowmobile tracks and a dead coyote had been located on the frozen lake. The tracks, confirmed from the plane, led to an abandoned farm where two snowmobiles were parked.

Bluem, with the assistance of game warden Jackie Lundstrom, located the snowmobiles, collected serial numbers and photographed the machines. The wardens tried to locate the dead coyote, but gave up the search when it got dark.

Bluem returned the next day with game warden Erik Schmidt. The officers once again followed the tracks and located the coyote, which appeared to have been run over by a snowmobile. The track pattern at the scene matched one of the two snowmobiles found the night before parked in the abandoned farmyard.

X-rays of the coyote showed that the animal appeared to have a broken bone in an upper leg. No bullets or bullet fragments were found in the coyote.

The investigation further showed that while the snowmobile in question

was registered in Wyoming, it came back to an individual from Bismarck. Bluem learned that the snowmobile's owner was at the abandoned property with his son and girlfriend the weekend the coyote was killed. Bluem interviewed all three individuals and confirmed that the owner had chased and ran over the coyote on Horsehead Lake, killing it.

The suspect was charged with harassing a furbearer with a motor vehicle; illegal possession and taking of a furbearer; use of a motor vehicle in a restricted area (for driving across state school lands); and failure to register a snowmobile. The suspect plead guilty and paid fines/fees of \$1,050, spent five days in jail and forfeited the snowmobile used to kill the coyote.



2013 SUMMARY OF VIOLATIONS

BIG GAME

Failure to accompany/transport other's game4

Failure to wear florescent orange5

Tagging violations23

Exceeding limit.....8

Killing wrong species or sex.....3

Illegal possession/taking7

Hunting in closed season.....5

Shining (using artificial light).....1

Other big game violations5

Total 61

SMALL GAME

Using gun able to hold more than 3 shells.....86

Hunting in closed season.....7

Illegal possession/taking9

Exceeding limit.....19

Failure to leave identification or sex of game.....24

Killing wrong sex or species.....6

Failure to accompany/transport other's game12

Nontoxic shot violation5

Failure to HIP register1

Failure to carry federal waterfowl stamp11

Other small game violations72

Total 202

BOATING

Use of unlicensed or unnumbered boat52

Failure to display boat registration.....10

Operating without lights at night.....30

Inadequate number of PFDs144

Water skiing violations43

Reckless or negligent operation2

Operating vessel under influence/intoxicated.....12

Other boating violations71

Total 364

FISHING

Fishing with excessive lines46

Exceeding limit105

Fishing in closed/restricted area4

Failure to attend lines12

No identification on fish house.....11

Failure to remove fish house9

ANS violation.....35

Paddlefish violations4

Other fishing violations58

Total 284

FURBEARER

Shining (using artificial light).....7

Illegal possession/taking3

Harassing furbearers with motor vehicle.....7

Hunting/trapping in closed season.....4

Other furbearer violations13

Total 34

GENERAL

Use of motor vehicle off established trail.....2

Use of motor vehicle in restricted area...31

Harassing wildlife with motor vehicle2

Hunting on posted land without permission34

Hunting before/after legal hours19

Wanton waste4

Aid in concealment of unlawful game6

Hunting in wrong unit/closed area.....12

Loaded firearm in motor vehicle61

Discharge of firearm within/on motor vehicle5

440 yard violation12

Littering94

Other general violations12

Total 294

LICENSING

Failure to sign/affix stamp20

Hunting/fishing/trapping without proper license305

Failure to carry license on person304

Misrepresentation on license or application.....19

Other licensing violations14

Total 662

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS/REFUGE

Failure to obey posted regulations46

Camping.....15

Tree stand violations.....3

Possession of glass beverage containers53

Baiting on WMA1

Possession/discharge of fireworks7

Prohibited uses of motor vehicles37

Other WMA/refuge violations.....8

Total 172

MISCELLANEOUS

Possession of controlled substance.....11

Possession of drug paraphernalia14

Open container.....29

Minor in possession.....39

Criminal trespass12

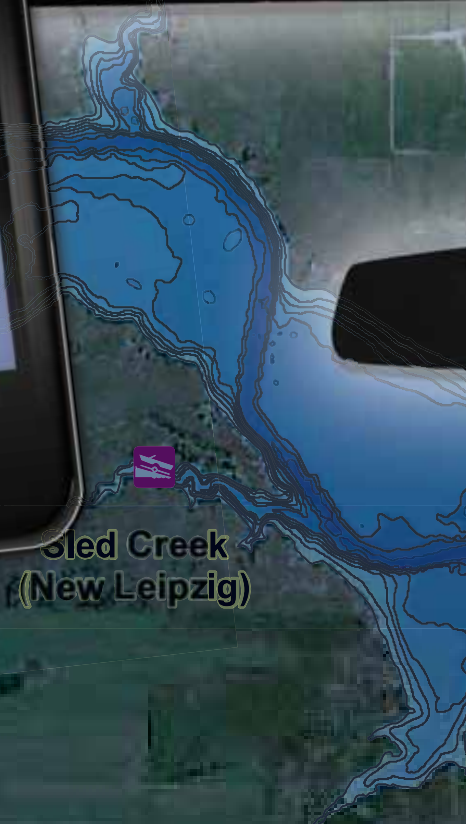
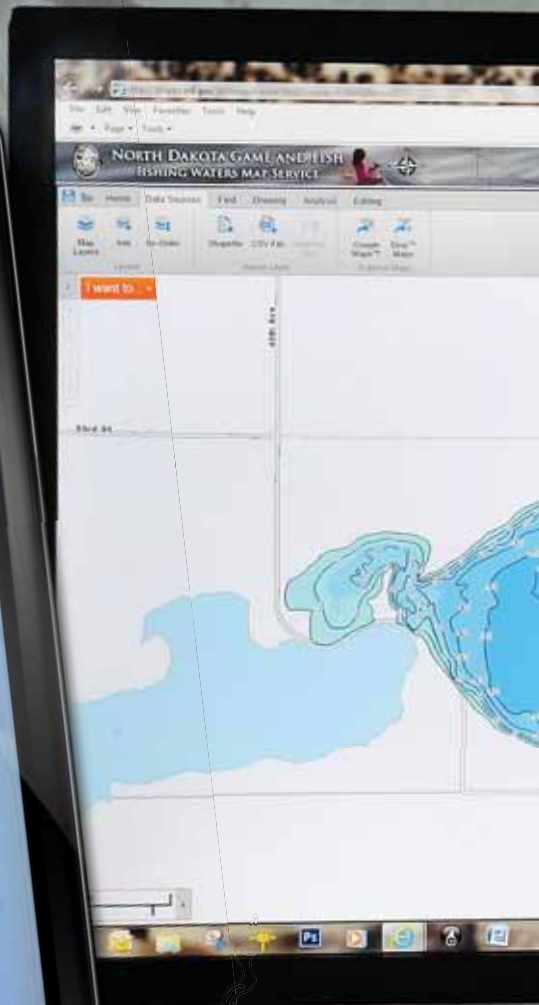
Other miscellaneous28

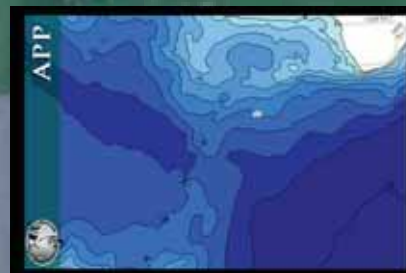
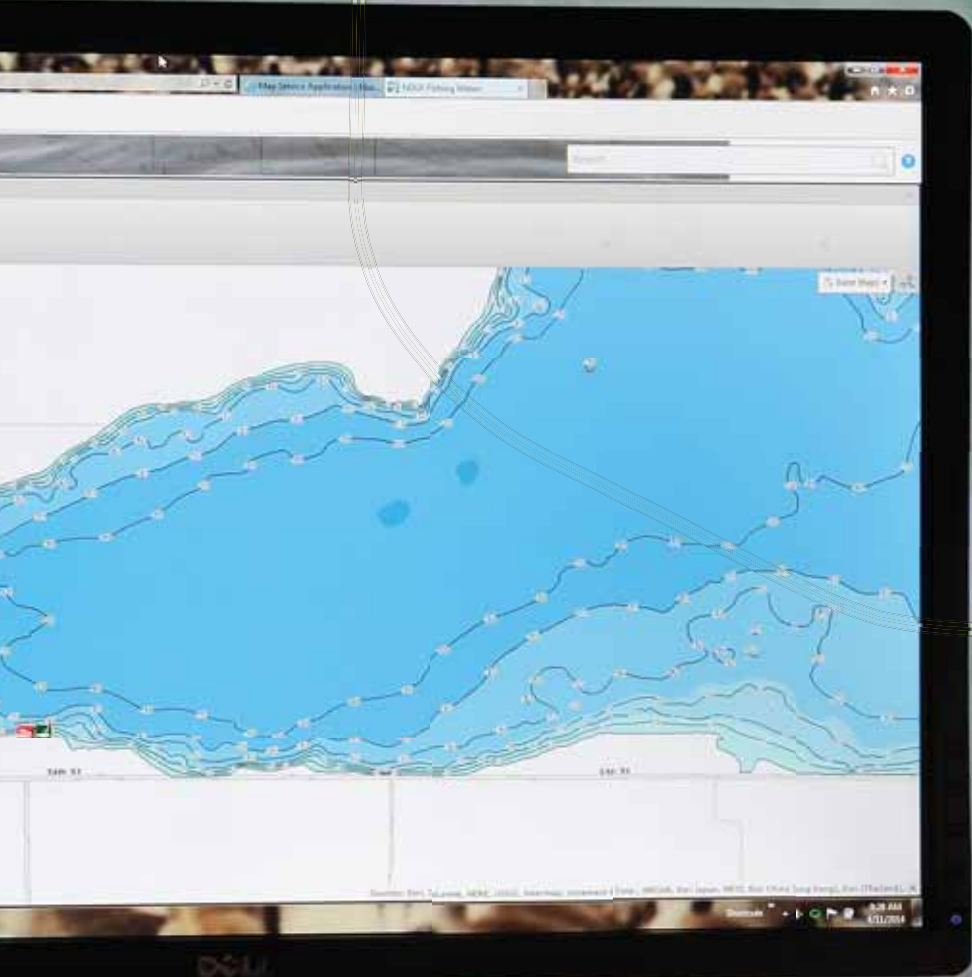
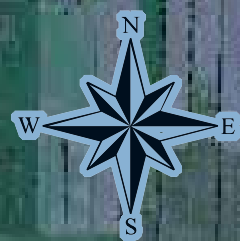
Total 133



Game and Fish Department wardens participated in drown-proofing and water rescue training earlier this year at the BSC Aquatic and Wellness Center in Bismarck.

LARA ANDERSON





North Dakota anglers can snag various map applications on their smartphones or other mobile devices by adding the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's website to their tackle boxes.

Software applications, or apps, designed to operate on smartphones, tablet computers or other mobile devices with Internet access, can be accessed for free from the website, providing information on everything from up-to-date fishery reports and boat ramp access, to the location of the nearest fish cleaning station.

Elgin Sportsmen

Carson Sportsmen

Boy Scout Camp

ND Outdoors 7

Lower end Dam

This photo features an angler trying his luck from a fishing pier at the Alkaline Lake boat ramp in Kidder County. On pages 6-7, what is pictured on the computer screen is an interactive map on the Game and Fish Department's website of the same lake, which denotes the same boat launch with a red boat ramp icon.



CRAIG BIRLLE

“You open the door to free public access to this information,” says Jerry Weigel, Game and Fish Department fisheries production and development section supervisor. “It’s putting the product in the angler’s hands without them having to pay for anything and giving them lots of options. It’s a real easy way to access that data.”

Various fishing-related maps are available on the Department’s website, from simplistic downloadable PDFs to interactive maps.

“We’re trying to accommodate a variety of users by giving them a flavor of whatever they like,” said Brian Hosek, Department GIS manager.

Start at <http://gf.nd.gov/maps>, the Game and Fish Department’s website.

There, the Department offers a variety of Web-based maps. Other than the traditional browser experience, these maps are also available on smartphone apps in the Apple app store, Google Play store and Windows phone store. These apps offer additional features, including location GPS services.

For a quick look at the maps most utilized, click on “Map Index” and scroll down to the “Fisheries and Boating” heading, where fishing waters contour maps and boating access maps are available in simple PDFs or Web map formats.

Click on “Fishing Waters Contour Maps” to access information on more than 200 different lakes in North Dakota. For example, click on Lake Tschida (Heart Butte Reservoir) in Grant County and you’ll get the latest fishing status: “Dominated by small walleye, but some up to 10 pounds, 2-5 pound northern pike, white bass up to 2 pounds, catfish up to 10 pounds and smallmouth bass up to 2 pounds. Some perch up to 1 pound, crappie up to 2 pounds and

small bluegill. Many large buffalo present.”

With another click, get a contour map of the lake.

A boating access map shows boating access locations and descriptions across the state by clicking on that area’s icon.

“That’s where the simplistic Web maps are very helpful. They reach those folks who want that one-click experience,” Hosek said.

The Game and Fish Department’s interactive map services provide a vast amount of data and functionality all through the Web browser. Users can customize maps using the various tools provided in the application. Or they can simply display or print the desired map.

“The nice feature about these is you can look at them through the browser or you can bring many of these maps up on your mobile devices,” Hosek said.

Click on “Map Service Applications” and “ND Game and Fish ArcGIS Online Site.” Go to the top of the page and click on “Gallery,” where you’ll find about 15 fishing-related Web-based maps and interactive maps viewable on mobile devices or a desktop, including:

- Fish Stocking History – Includes the past five years of Department stocking information, such as the lake name, stocking date, species, stock size and total stocked. Click on the stocking icon and use the scroll button to get the complete stocking information.
- Missouri River System and Devils Lake Boat Ramps – Includes active, usable ramps on the Missouri River, Upper Missouri River, Yellowstone River, Lake Sakakawea, Lake Oahe, Devils Lake and Stump Lake. Additional information includes lake name, location and general area,

type of ramp, year constructed and handicap accessibility.

- **Fishery Status and Driving Directions** – Provides a complete list of active North Dakota fishing waters. Click on the fish icon to get driving directions and the current status of the fishery for the season.
- **Lake Contours** – Includes all active, Department-managed fishing waters and lake bathymetry (contours) for more than 200 lakes. Additional information includes lake surface acres, top three sport fish, driving directions, current status of the fishery for the season and, if available, a link to a printable fishing contour map.
- **Fishing Piers** – Contains active, usable Department-managed public fishing piers. Additional information includes lake name, type of pier and year constructed.
- **Fishing Facilities** – Contains active, usable Department-managed public fishing facilities, including boat ramps, courtesy docks, fishing piers, vault toilets and fish cleaning stations. Additional information includes lake name, type and category of facility, year constructed and handicap accessibility.
- **Boating Access** – Includes all active, usable ramps of North Dakota boating access sites. Additional information includes lake name, location and general area, type of ramp, year constructed and handicap accessibility.

Using the interactive map applications, users can interact with the map features and customize the maps they desire.

“Those applications tend to have more functionality. They offer a rich user experience with additional tools and widgets,” Hosek said.

Offering real-time data is one advantage to the maps, Weigel said. “So when the consumers are hitting that app, they’re getting the most up-to-date information.”

And the information is available 24/7.

For example, the boating access app shares any limited access during flooding, drought or ice jams. Users can check on the status of a ramp before driving to the destination and finding it closed, Hosek said.

The website also includes maps to upload onto GPS units, offering information on fishing facilities and lake contours. Install the ESRI ArcGIS app available on the website for location services on a smartphone.

“Once you’re on that lake, you have no way to know for certain you’re over a spot that the map shows. When it’s real-time on your phone, you can

turn on the GPS and the GPS will show you if you’re there or not,” Weigel said.

“We attempt to make these maps as dynamic as possible. There’s a lot of information out there,” Hosek added.

The apps and maps certainly offer another advantage in hooking a whopper.

“It provides a lot of things that once were a big mystery,” Weigel said.

LUANN DART is a freelance writer from Elgin, North Dakota.





Bassin' and Kayakin'

on the Sheyenne

*Story and
Photos by
Craig Bihrlle*

Kayaking is often associated with fast-moving mountain streams and thrill-seeking paddlers dodging through rock rapids,



The Shyenne River that courses through central and southeastern North Dakota is ideal for a floating fishing trip, with scenic shorelines, plentiful fish and lots of elbow room. Inset: Ron Strauss shows off one of the Shyenne's feisty smallmouth bass.

almost a polar opposite experience compared to that of three fishermen who floated down North Dakota's Shyenne River one calm evening last summer.



Chris Carlisle has fished the Sheyenne and many other destinations frequently since he purchased a kayak about five years ago.



They did encounter one slight riffle that required a few seconds of concentration, but the real thrill they sought on this effort would come from the formidable tug of one of the Sheyenne's mostly unpestered game fish species at the end of a fishing line.

In this part of the country, kayaks have become more popular as recreational watercraft, taking away some of the market-share occupied by canoes for decades. And any craft that transports a person away from shore and out onto the water has the potential as a platform for fishing.

Much like boats that are specifically designed for pulling water-skiers, fishing, or transporting large floating social outings, kayaks aren't all the same. While most people associate kayaks with sleek, water-hugging vessels that you sit in to paddle, fishing kayaks are made to sit *on*. They are typically a much more stable platform than, say, a canoe. And because an angler sits on top, some of that hollow space inside is available for storing gear instead of legs.

That's what the anglers who pushed and pulled their kayaks down the bank at Faust Park on the Sheyenne north of Valley City were using. The group consisted of



Matt Nelson, Fargo, admires a Sheyenne smallmouth before releasing it. Walleye and northern pike are also possible catches on stretches of the state's longest river.

Chris Carlisle of Aneta, North Dakota; Matt Nelson, Fargo; and Ron Strauss, Roseville, Minnesota.

Carlisle is vice president, and Straus is president, of the Minnesota Kayak Fishing Association, a regional club for kayak anglers, and the Sheyenne is a popular destination for member outings.

Carlisle bought his first kayak about five years ago. "I was an avid angler without a boat," he said.

The turning point came while shore-fishing along the Red River in Fargo with a friend. "We decided it'd be really nice to be able to get out to some of those places we couldn't walk to," Carlisle remembered. "We solved the problem with a kayak."

Obviously, kayaks have limitations that boats don't. Like, most people aren't going to paddle a kayak a couple of miles out to a productive sunken island when the wind is stirring up a good walleye chop.

On the other hand, Carlisle says, "We get out into little streams and places that boats can't get to, you get left alone for the most part ... and we catch a lot of fish. Bass, pike, perch walleye, you name it, we catch it."

The Sheyenne, from the tailrace of Baldhill Dam which backs up Lake Ashtabula, to its joining with the Red River north of Fargo, is one of those places that large boats mostly can't get too. It has a couple of boat ramps on its winding route, but canoes or kayaks have more potential access.

To validate that point, on that evening last July, on several miles of the Sheyenne from Faust Park down to the take-out at the Valley City National Fish

Hatchery, the only anglers on or along the river were kayakers.

While fishing activity was noticeably light on that ideal summer night, it wasn't because of the potential for catching fish.

"Parts of the Sheyenne are awfully good for small-mouth bass," says Gene Van Eeckhout, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's southeast district fisheries manager.

In addition, the Sheyenne also has walleye, often caught below the lowhead dams, and northern pike at times when they run up from the Red, Van Eeckhout said.

Carlisle fishes the Sheyenne frequently, as it's fairly close to home, and it's always accessible, no matter how hard the prairie wind is blowing. On open water lakes, however, wind can be an issue.

"We go out to enjoy ourselves," Carlisle says, "and you can't enjoy it as much when it's windy ... but if you're only going to go out when the wind is 5 miles per hour and the sky is clear, you're not going to go out much."

The group's periodic outings have run the gamut from small rivers like the Sheyenne and Red rivers, to Devils Lake to the Mississippi River.

"There's just something about that kayak," Carlisle says. "There's pretty much no place I won't take it."

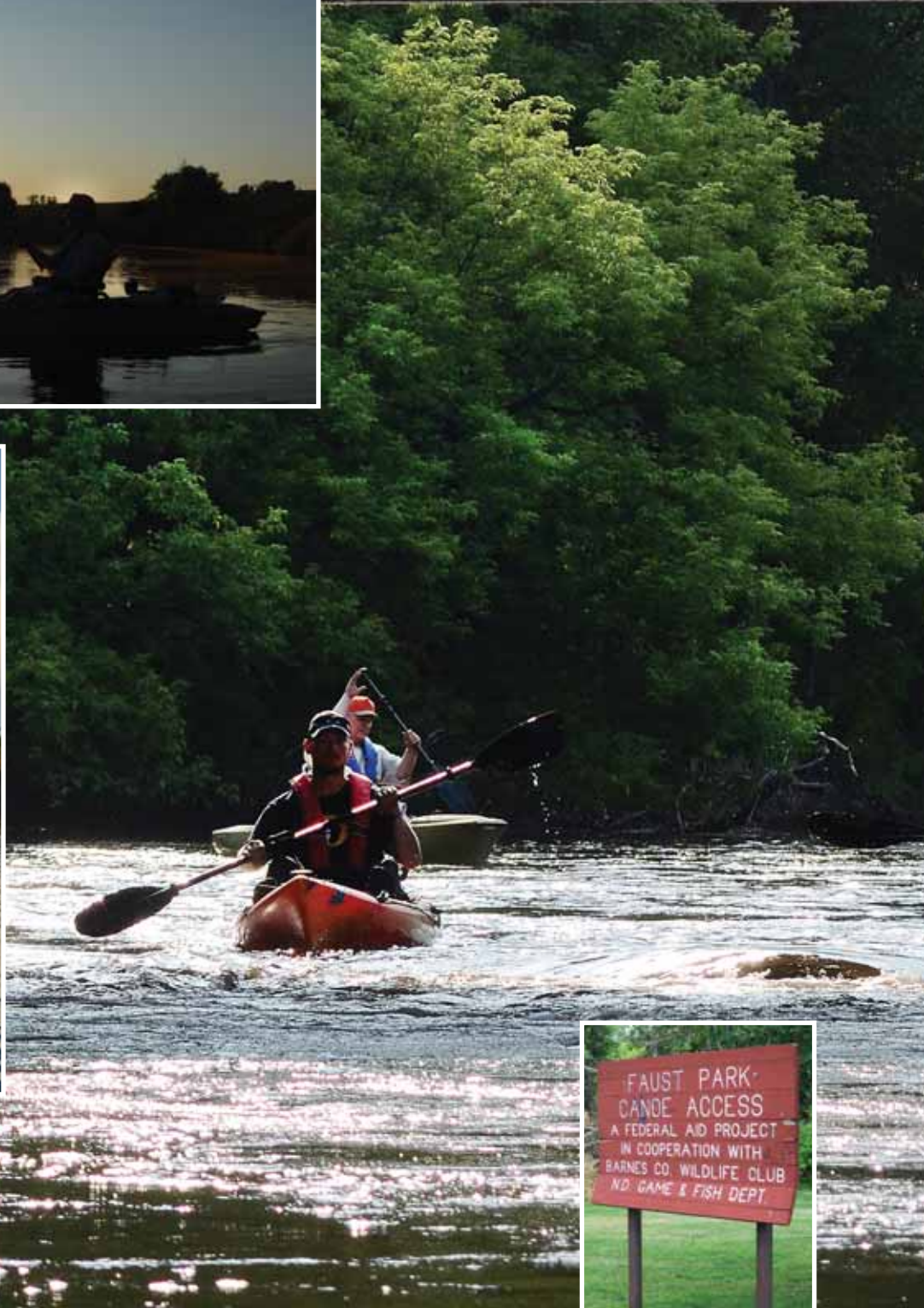
CRAIG BIHRLE is the Game and Fish Department's communications supervisor.

ON *the* WEB



The Minnesota Kayak Fishing Association is for anyone in the Midwest to learn more about kayak fishing and regional outings for kayak anglers. Website address is: www.mnkayakfishingassociation.org.

A video adaptation of this story is on the Web at www.vimeo.com/71250041.



ANS PREVENTION, MONITORING ONGOING

By Ron Wilson



ASHLEY SALWEY

North Dakota Game and Fish Department fisheries personnel work the edge of the James River in an electro-fishing boat in search of invasive silver carp.

While North Dakota is more than holding its own in a nationwide resistance effort against aquatic nuisance species, the fight to limit the introduction and spread of exotics in the state is ongoing.

In 2013, Game and Fish Department staff monitored nearly half of the state's record 400-plus waters, turning up just one new infestation – curly leaf pondweed in Grass Lake in Richland County.

According to fisheries division reports, the state's most expansive nuisance in terms of recent documented infestations is curly leaf pondweed, which is found in about a dozen waters, while Eurasian water milfoil is found in just two. Greg Power, Department fisheries chief, said that known ANS infestations are, overall, generally stable or appear to be in decline.

Fred Ryckman, Department fisheries supervisor, said fisheries staff again found a few adult silver carp in the James River in 2013. These exotics made their way into the North Dakota portion of the James during extremely high flows in 2011.

"There are some adults still in the river, but there is no sign as of yet of reproduction or recruitment,"

Ryckman. "This small group of adult fish is maturing and will likely release eggs, but whether the eggs will hatch is unknown. I don't think the James River is good habitat for silver carp reproduction, but we don't know that for a fact at this point."

In 2013, for the second year in a row, zebra mussels were not found in the Otter Tail and Red rivers at Wahpeton, where immature mussels were first detected in 2010 and then again in 2011. Unfortunately, adult zebra mussels have become established in Minnesota's Otter Tail River, and have been documented by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to have moved farther downstream and closer to North Dakota in the past few years.

In fall 2013, adult zebra mussels were discovered in Lake Winnipeg, which means the mussels are now found both downstream and upstream of the Red River in North Dakota.

"When mussels were discovered in Lake Winnipeg, our fisheries guys spent a lot of time on the Red looking for adult zebra mussels, but found none," Power said. "The bottom line is the Red River remains free of adult zebra mussels. The future looks cloudy, however."

Game and Fish Department biologists speculate on why the Red River in North Dakota has thus far dodged the adult zebra mussel bullet. "Maybe the tipping point that makes it difficult for adult zebra mussels to become establish in the Red is the water chemistry," Power said. "Maybe the water chemistry and sediment load varies just enough that the environment is too hostile. Time will tell."

The list of ANS that fisheries personnel are on the lookout for in North Dakota is not terribly long, but new exotics have been added over time. Last year, fisheries personnel and others made a special effort to determine whether rusty crayfish were present in North Dakota waters.

"To the best of our knowledge, we have just two species of crayfish in North Dakota and the rusty crayfish isn't one of them," Power said.

Department fisheries staff collected crayfish from North Dakota lakes during fish sampling efforts in 2013, while Valley City State University staff and students sampled rivers and streams.

"This intensive sampling effort provided a good representative sample of crayfish from around the state," Power said. "And, thankfully, our previous belief that rusty crayfish don't exist in the state was confirmed."

According to Minnesota Sea Grant, rusty crayfish have invaded much of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Ontario, and portions of 17 other states. This invasive species is believed to outcompete native crayfish, and decrease the density and variety of aquatic invertebrates and plants.

Wildlife officials believe that rusty crayfish were introduced into unfamiliar waters in Minnesota and elsewhere by anglers using the exotics as bait.

Because North Dakota is a destination for nonresident hunters, anglers,

boaters and other outdoor enthusiasts who hail from states with ANS problems, the threat of aquatic nuisance species hitching a ride into the state remains a legitimate concern.

Understanding this, the Game and Fish Department's warden force has redirected time and resources, especially in eastern North Dakota, to patrol for exotic species that could come into the state on boats, trailers and other outdoor equipment.

"Protecting the state from ANS is definitely a priority, and we have and will continue to redirect time and manpower to this," said Robert Timian, Department enforcement division chief. "The challenge is determining the amount of time and manpower to dedicate to ANS."

In 2013, more than 30 ANS violations were reported in North Dakota as compared to just a dozen in 2012.

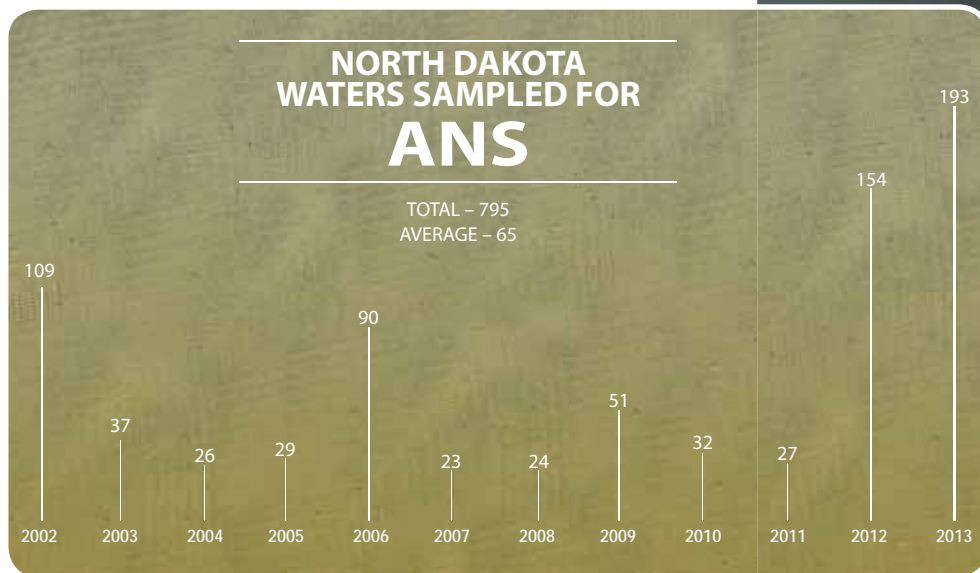
While educating people on the fallout of aquatic nuisance species infestations, which the Game and Fish Department has been doing for more than a decade, is important, Ryckman said enforcement is critical to keeping North Dakota relatively free of invading pests.

"When it comes to obeying ANS regulations, there are some people out there who know better, but refuse to do the right thing," Ryckman said. "We need to make sure that we have really good compliance, not just ho-hum compliance."

RON WILSON is editor of *North Dakota OUTDOORS*.



Curly leaf pondweed is the state's most expansive aquatic nuisance species.





BUFFALOBERRY PATCH

By Greg Freeman, Department News Editor



Peterson Named Game and Fish Deputy Director

State Game and Fish Director Terry Steinwand has appointed longtime employee Scott Peterson as the agency's new deputy director.

Peterson, a native of Montpelier in southern Stutsman County, started his new position May 1. He has been the Department's wildlife resource management section leader at the Lonetree district office, located southwest of Harvey, for 22 years.

“Scott has proven his leadership abilities over the years,” Steinwand said. “I look forward to working closely with him on the issues.”

Peterson said he is humbled and honored to accept the position. “I have a deep appreciation for what the staff at the Game and Fish Department has been able to accomplish over the years, and know how hard they work to protect and maintain the resource,” he said.

Duane DeKrey, who had served in the position since January 2013, left the agency to work for the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District.

BIGHORN SHEEP POPULATION STABLE

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department's annual bighorn sheep survey revealed a minimum of 293 bighorn sheep in western North Dakota, nearly unchanged from the previous count of 297.

In total, biologists counted 85 rams, 159 ewes and 49 lambs. Not included are 24 bighorn sheep introduced from Alberta in February, and approximately 30 bighorns in the North Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Brett Wiedmann, Department big game biologist, said the count in the northern badlands was the highest on record, beating the previous record set in 2012, but the southern badlands population declined 15 percent.

“Rams and lambs showed a slight decline,

but adult ewes increased,” Wiedmann said. “About 75 percent of lambs counted during last summer's survey survived the winter, which is about average, but the recruitment rate of 37 percent was above average.”

Game and Fish Department biologists count and classify all bighorn sheep in late summer, and then recount lambs the following March, as they approach one year of age, to determine recruitment.

Wiedmann is encouraged by another year of healthy numbers of lambs because it is indicative of a healthy population. “Adult mortality was also low last winter, so we expect another good crop of lambs,” he said.

Game and Fish allocated five bighorn sheep hunting licenses for 2014, one more than 2013.

ANGLERS, BOAT OWNERS NEED CURRENT LICENSES

Anglers and boat owners are reminded to renew their licenses for the 2014 fishing and boating season.

Anglers must have a 2014-15 fishing license. Fishing licenses can be purchased online at the Game and Fish Department website, gf.nd.gov. A new state law requires residents age 18 or older to prove residency on the application by submitting a valid North Dakota driver's license number or a North Dakota nondriver photo identification number.

The 2013 state legislature established new fees for several licenses, including resident individual fishing (\$16), resident husband and wife (\$22) and combination (\$50). The combination license includes fishing, general game and habitat, small game and furbearer.

Boat owners are reminded that 2014 is the first year of a new three-year registration period. The new boat registration cycle runs through December 31, 2016.

The price to register motorboats under 16 feet in length, and all canoes, is \$18; motorboats from 16 feet to less than 20

feet in length \$36; and motorboats at least 20 feet in length \$45.

Renewal notices were mailed to boat owners last December. Those who did not receive a renewal notice should contact the Game and Fish Department at 701-328-6335, or email ndgf@nd.gov. Many renewals were returned because some owners who moved within the last three years did not notify the Department with their new address.

Boat registrations can be renewed online at the Department's website, by clicking the online services link, and “watercraft registration and renewals” under the watercraft heading.

Also, anyone buying a new or used watercraft can register online and generate a 10-day temporary permit that is valid until the registration is processed.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department is self-funded and only receives revenue from license sales and federal funds.





CRAIG BIRHLE

CAMPING RESTRICTIONS ON SOME WMAS

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department will continue to implement camping restrictions on some wildlife management areas in western North Dakota and along Lake Sakakawea.

Overnight camping is prohibited on the following WMAs: Antelope Creek, Lewis and Clark, Big Oxbow, Ochs Point, Neu's Point (except campers accessing by boat, and only at the point area), Overlook, Sullivan and Tobacco Garden in McKenzie County; Van Hook in Mountrail County; and Hofflund and Trenton in Williams County.

Lewis and Clark WMA is closed from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise unless users are legally engaged in fishing, hunting or trapping. However, camping is allowed for paddlefish snaggers at the pumphouse area and at Neu's at the point by boat access. Glass bottles are prohibited.

In addition, the following WMAs are closed to camping

on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, but open to camping Thursday-Monday: North Lemmon Lake in Adams County; Bull Creek in Billings County; Alkali Creek and Spring Creek in Bowman County; Smishek Lake and Short Creek Dam in Burke County; Harris M. Baukol in Divide County; Killdeer Mountains in Dunn County; Camels Hump Lake in Golden Valley County; Indian Creek in Hettinger County; Audubon, Custer Mine, Deepwater Creek, deTrobriand, Douglas Creek and Wolf Creek in McLean County; Beaver Creek and Hille in Mercer County; Storm Creek in Morton County; Cedar Lake and Speck Davis Pond in Slope County; and McGregor Dam in Williams County.

On those WMAs where camping is allowed Thursday through Monday, all equipment must be removed on Tuesday and Wednesdays when camping is not allowed.

The rules ensure these areas are available for hunters and anglers. Camping restrictions at all WMAs are posted at entry points.



CRAIG BIRHLE

DEER MEETINGS GENERATE HIGH INTEREST

Except for a reduced number of licenses available, North Dakota's 2014 deer seasons will look pretty much the same as in previous years.

Through a series of public meetings and an open comment period earlier this year, deer hunters provided a lot of input for the Game and Fish Department to consider for 2015 and beyond.

"We told people at the meetings that it was very unlikely any major changes would take place this year," said Randy Kreil, Department wildlife division chief. "Aside from adjustments to the total number of deer gun season licenses, we won't be recommending any changes in season structure or the number of licenses any one deer hunter can have."

Game and Fish wildlife managers will analyze the hundreds of written and verbal comments received, before deciding whether to pursue changes for 2015.

More than 800 people attended eight deer meetings held around the state. Several hundred additional hunters either watched the final meeting broadcast online, or viewed a recorded version. Game and Fish received about 400 written online comments and many other direct emails and phone calls.

"We expected high interest in this process and the response we got was even above that," Kreil said. "North Dakota hunters are passionate about our deer hunting tradition. Our long-term hope is that habitat trends will allow us to rebuild the deer population from where it is now to a level that is satisfactory to the deer hunting public. Most people seem willing to make some type of short-term licensing-related changes to help us do that. Because of the great response we've had, we have a lot of ideas to evaluate, some of which are new or variations of the current system."

Game and Fish set up the meetings and public comment process to explore some ideas for changes in deer license allocation the agency has received in recent years, in response to a declining deer population and fewer available licenses. In 2008 Game and Fish allocated nearly 150,000 licenses and in 2013 the total fell to 59,500. The 2014 allocation is 48,000.

While even at 150,000 licenses, not every hunter could get a preferred license in a preferred unit. Kreil said the number of hunters who applied for a gun season license and didn't get one has increased significantly over the past years.

As with all issues, Game and Fish is open to continuing public input. The general Department email address is ndgf@nd.gov; and phone number is 701-328-6300.



BRENNEN STOTTS

Lisbon Youth Wins Best of Show

A northern pintail, titled “Just Chilling,” was chosen the 2014 Best of Show in the North Dakota Junior Duck Stamp Contest.

Brennen Stotts, an 18-year-old high school student from Lisbon, used a colored pencil to depict a lone pintail standing on the edge of a wetland. His artwork was selected from a record 1,300 contest entries from across North Dakota.

Stott’s drawing will represent North Dakota at the National Junior Duck Stamp Contest. The winner of the national contest will have their entry made into a stamp.

Other first-place winners in the four age categories were:

- Grades K-3: Mikaela Woodruff, Garrison; Joshua Zaharia, Neche; and KayLeigh Lucy, Kenmare.
- Grades 4-6: Megan Burgard, Towner; Tyson Tomlinson, Sawyer; and Alora Woodruff, Garrison.
- Grades 7-9: Megan Tichy, Tower City; Trent Hunsakor, Newburg; and D.J. Elstrom, Valley City.
- Grades 10-12: Abby Brown, Valley City; and Tia Wagar, Valley City.

HUNTING GUIDE AND OUTFITTER TEST

The next guide and outfitter written examination is May 17 at 1 p.m. at the North Dakota Game and Fish Department office in Bismarck.

The test is given periodically to anyone interested in becoming a hunting guide or outfitter in the state.

In addition to passing a written exam, qualifications for becoming a guide include a background check for criminal and game and fish violations; certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and standard first aid; and employment by or contract with a licensed hunting outfitter.

Hunting outfitter eligibility requirements include the guide qualifications, as well as an individual must have held a hunting guide license for two years; and must have proof of liability insurance.

Interested individuals are required to preregister by calling the Game and Fish Department’s enforcement office at 701-328-6604.

Occupied Eagle Nests

The State Game and Fish Department is asking for help in locating bald eagle nests in North Dakota.

Sandra Johnson, Game and Fish Department conservation biologist, said the Department is looking for locations of nests with eagles present, not individual eagle sightings.

“It is easy to distinguish an eagle nest because of its enormous size,” she said.

Historically, Johnson said eagle nests were found along the Missouri River. Now, they’ve been observed in more than half the counties in the state, mostly near streams and mid- to large-sized lakes. However, nests are also found in unique areas such as shelterbelts surrounded by cropland or pasture.

Johnson estimates the state has around 120 active bald eagle nests, possibly more.

Nest observations should be reported to Johnson at 701-328-6382, or by email at ndgf@nd.gov.

Observers are asked to not disturb nests, and to stay away at a safe distance.

“It is important not to approach the nest as foot traffic may disturb the bird, likely causing the eagle to leave her eggs or young unattended,” Johnson said.



SANDRA JOHNSON



ASHLEY SALWEY

Students participate in the North Dakota Archery in the Schools Program state tournament held in Bismarck earlier this spring.

NASP State Tournament Results

More than 500 archers registered in April to compete in the North Dakota National Archery in the Schools Program state tournament in Bismarck.

Jeff Long, Game and Fish Department NASP coordinator, said: "This program continues to grow every year, and all three winning teams committed to go to the national tournament, along with at least three of the top individuals."

Long said participation in 2014 was up 20 percent from last year.

The national tournament is May 9-10 in Louisville, Kentucky. The Game and Fish Department and North Dakota Bowhunters Association contribute \$3,000 in travel assistance to the first place team in each division, and \$1,000 to the overall male and female individual winners.

The high school (grades 9-12) state championship team was from Hankinson; middle school (grades 7-8) champs from Wahpeton; and taking top honors in the elementary school (grades 4-6) division was Wilton.

Overall male and female winners were Kyle Andres of Medina and Lisa Buckhaus of Hankinson. Top elementary winners were Austin Bladow of Hankinson and Grace Neameyer of Mt. Pleasant.

The top five place winners in each division were:

- High school boys – Andres; Spencer Brockman, North Sargent; James Nadeau, Dunseith; Isaac Poitra, Dunseith; and Dominic Bendickson, Griggs County Central.
- High school girls – Buckhaus, Hankinson; Hunter Schroeder, Dunseith; Deena Monson, Griggs County Central; Ashlynn Stirling, Hankinson; Danielle Schuler, Wilton; and Theresia Thompson, Hankinson.
- Middle school boys – Dawson McKeever, North Sargent; Race Kath, Hankinson; Michael McKenna, North Sargent; Eric Salvesen, Griggs County Central; and Dylan Pearson, Wahpeton.
- Middle school girls – Alicia Biewer, Hankinson; Kate Loewen, Hankinson; Olivia Waswick, North Sargent; Kailee Klein, Wahpeton; and Mary Goroski, Wahpeton.
- Elementary boys – Bladow; Ryan Kath, Hankinson; Gage Schuh, Wilton; Tavon Stadler, Griggs County Central; Malachi Appel, Twin Buttes; and Brayden Wehseler, North Sargent.
- Elementary girls – Neameyer; Kinley Hetletved, Wilton; Taryn Schurhamer, Wilton; Melonie Lee, Barnes County North; Lauryn Hibl, Wahpeton.



IMPORTANT DATES IN JUNE

Here are some dates to remember in June. North Dakota anglers are reminded of the free fishing weekend June 7-8.

Resident anglers may fish that weekend without a license, except for paddlefish. All other fishing regulations apply.

Also, the application deadline for the 2014 deer gun and muzzle-loader season is June 4. Applicants can visit the Game and Fish Department's website at gf.nd.gov to submit a lottery application online, or to print an application for mailing. 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.



ASH BORER, GYPSY MOTH MONITORING CONTINUES

Each year, the North Dakota Forest Service cooperates with the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service and North Dakota Department of Agriculture to implement early detection trapping efforts for the emerald ash borer and gypsy moth, both pests of potentially great significance to overall forest resources in North Dakota.

The emerald ash borer was first detected in Michigan in 2002, and has since quickly spread to 22 states and two Canadian provinces (as of March 2014), killing tens of millions of ash trees.

Gypsy moths have been in the United States for nearly 150 years, since an unintentional release in Massachusetts. They feed on a variety of hosts, preferring the economically and ecologically important oak species.

Neither of these destructive pests are currently found in North Dakota, according to Aaron Bergdahl, forest health specialist for the state Forest Service. Stressing the importance of continued monitoring programs, Bergdahl said that in 2014, both gypsy moth and emerald ash borer traps will be placed in areas that are categorized as having a greater risk of invasive tree pest introduction.

Both pests spread rather slowly on their own, but can spread quickly due to inadvertent human transport. Thus, high risk

areas include population centers, recreation areas, rest stops and other places where people may bring firewood harboring ash borer larvae or materials that may carry gypsy moth eggs.

Early detection of these tree pests will provide a broader set of options for management and possible eradication of the insects. People can help delay the introduction of these pests to North Dakota by not transporting firewood long distances, and encouraging those who visit the state to buy local firewood and to burn the firewood where they buy it.

More information about the emerald ash borer and gypsy moth is available at ndinvasives.org, or the state Department of Agriculture website, nd.gov/ndda.



CRAIG BHIRLE

Overall Winner
Emily Ehlert, Williston



Katie Ely
Bismarck



Peyton Nielsen
Surrey

Game and Fish Sponsors Earth Day Project

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department is once again celebrating Earth Day by sponsoring clean-up days on public-owned or managed lands in April and May.

Each member of a school, Girl Scout, Boy Scout, 4-H club or youth organization who participates in cleaning up public lands through May will receive 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 10x42 binoculars in the three age categories were Emily Ehlert of Williston (6-9), Katie Ely of Bismarck (10-13), and Peyton Nielsen of Surrey (14-18). Ehlert's design was chosen the contest winner, and will be used on this year's Earth Day patch.

Groups participating in the Earth Day project 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, Department outreach biologist, at 701-328-6332 to receive a reporting form for their project.

BOAT NORTH DAKOTA COURSE

Children ages 12-15 who want to operate a boat or personal watercraft this summer must take the state's boating basics course.

State law requires youngsters ages 12-15 to pass the course before they operate a boat or personal watercraft with at least a 10 horsepower motor. In addition, major insurance companies give adult boat owners who pass the course a premium discount on boat insurance.

The course is available for home-study from the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's Bismarck office. Two commercial providers also offer the course online, and links to those sites are found on the Department's website at gf.nd.gov.

While the home-study course is

free, students will be charged a fee to take it online. The online provider charges for the course, not the Game and Fish Department. The fee stays with the online provider.

Upon completion of the online test, and providing a credit card number, students will be able to print out a temporary certification card, and within 10 days a permanent card will be mailed.

The course covers legal requirements, navigation rules, getting underway, accidents and special topics such as weather, rules of the road, laws, life-saving and first aid. For more information contact Nancy Boldt, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, by email at ndgf@nd.gov; or call 701-328-6300.

Staff Notes



Rob Volack, Warden Pilot

WARDEN PILOT NAMED

Arizona native Rob Volack has been hired as the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's warden pilot. He was a pilot in the U.S. Marine Corps for the past seven years.

Volack has a professional aeronautics degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.

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NORTH DAKOTA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
100 North Bismarck Expressway • Bismarck, ND 58501-5095
Phone: 701-328-6300 • Email: ndgf@nd.gov • Website: gf.nd.gov



AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES

DRAIN YOUR LIVEWELL



State law requires boat operators to drain livewells, even if they contain fish, when leaving a water body. "Leaving a water body" means beyond the adjacent boat ramp parking area.

OTHER ANS PREVENTION LAWS



Remove all aquatic plants from boats, trailers and equipment before leaving any water body.



Drain all water from boats and other watercraft when leaving a water body.



Do not release baitfish in any North Dakota water, and do not bring in live aquatic bait from another state.

KEEP ANS OUT OF OUR WATER

NORTH DAKOTA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
100 North Bismarck Expressway
Bismarck, ND 58501-5095
701-328-6300
Email: ndgf@nd.gov
Web: gf.nd.gov



back cast

By Ron Wilson

If winter was our investment, this April morning is our overdue return.

It's 34 degrees without even a suggestion of breeze, so it feels warmer than that, comfortable. Sunrise is still minutes away, but we can already tell the sky will be big and blue.

We're dressed in mismatched camouflage, sitting on dirt and dry grass on a Morton County farm that's been in the same family for more than a century.

Behind us are two squat shelters that once provided refuge for hogs from the weather. To our left, a much bigger milking barn that was moved onto the property sometime in the 1940s, or thereabouts, rests in a chopsticks-pile of support beams, rafters and siding after ultimately surrendering to wind and heavy snow.

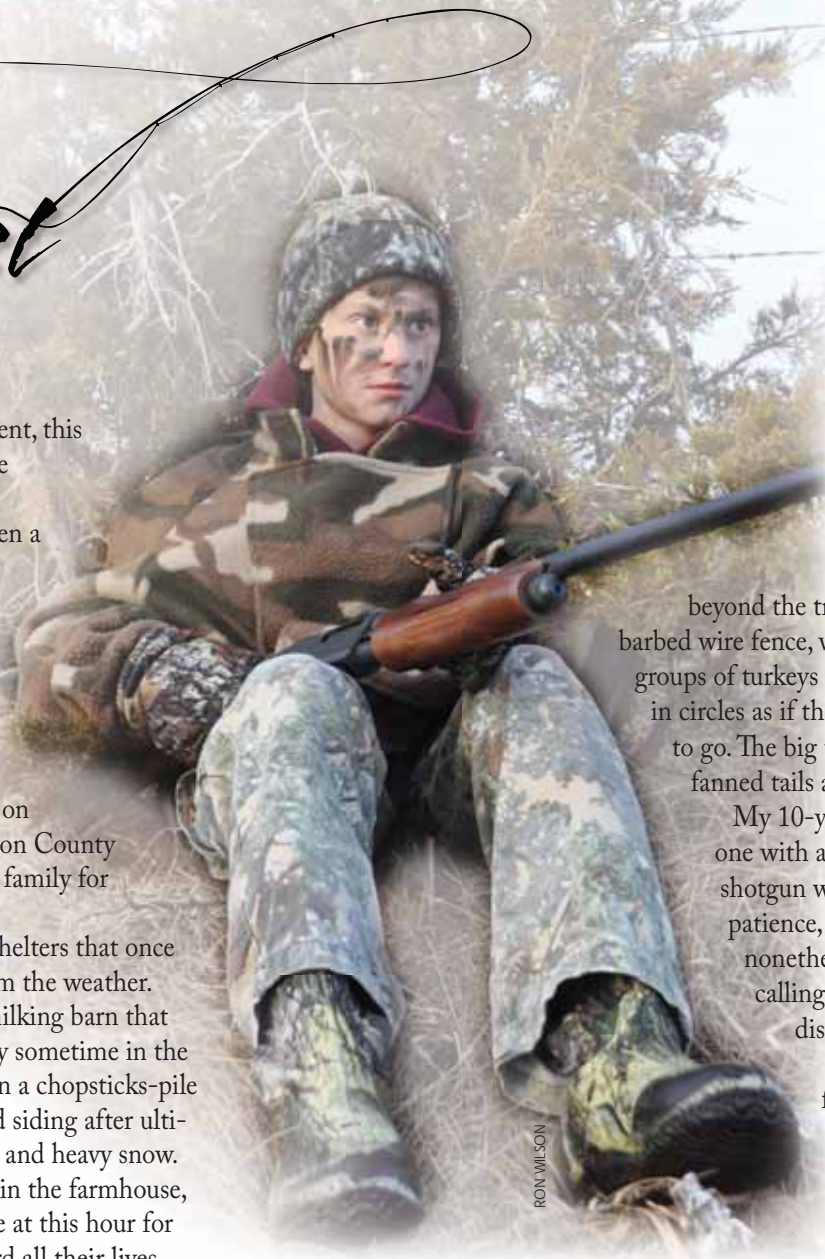
There aren't any lights on in the farmhouse, which is the way it should be at this hour for people who have worked hard all their lives. This year, for the first time in forever, there aren't any cattle on the property that need to be tended to before the day's first cup of coffee.

Without interruption from the wind, we can hear everything – the hum of passing traffic on blacktop a mile to the east, the unmistakable low-note cooing of sharp-tailed grouse dancing in a pasture somewhere north of here, and the rusty-gate calls of ring-necked roosters announcing to nearby hens that it's indeed the breeding season.

When the first rooster cackles from a patch of tall grass and weeds, a chain reaction of gobbles starts high in one cottonwood and works its way down the wooded draw and up another. Being mostly untested turkey hunters, we softly laugh out of nervousness, mixed with a touch of wonder at the clamor the big birds are making.

We don't know how many turkeys we are dealing with, it sounds like a bunch, but we need just one male, young or old, to cooperate, to strut within shotgun range.

On some unnoticeable cue, turkeys start dropping from their roosts, one following the other. The nearest birds thump to the



ground behind a screen of poplars, cottonwoods and other vegetation neither of us can name.

Uphill from where we sit, beyond the trees on the south side of a barbed wire fence, we catch glimpses of two groups of turkeys moving back and forth and in circles as if they can't decide which way to go. The big toms are strutting now, with fanned tails and puffed chests.

My 10-year-old hunting partner, the one with a turkey license and loaded shotgun who has shown pretty good patience, but is growing restless nonetheless, whispers we should try calling as the turkeys dance in the distance.

While I've read that it's difficult to call a turkey downhill, I'm not blaming the birds on the decline in the terrain for not responding. Every time I pull the striker

across the slate call in short, straight lines just like the directions on the package instruct, my hunting partner and I look at each other with the understanding that we sounded much better indoors at home during practice.

We've been silent for a while now, sitting as still as the hard ground allows when, without provoke, a turkey half-flies, half-jumps a fence and heads in our direction.

According to spring turkey hunting regulations, my hunting partner can only shoot a turkey with a beard sprouting from the middle of its chest, which in the majority of cases means a male turkey. Yet, biologists tell us that a percentage of hens grow beards, which makes them fair game by definition.

As if it was led in by an invisible string tied around its neck, the turkey put-puts broadside at 20 yards through a clearing, pauses as if to rub in its beardless chest just a little, and then disappears.

The parade ends with just one bird, a young hen that has unwittingly hooked us for the remainder of the season.

RON WILSON is editor of North Dakota OUTDOORS.



GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT PHOTO

A Look Back

By Ron Wilson

North Dakota Game and Fish Department fisheries staff first chemically renovated lakes of unwanted fish species in 1950.

Following successful treatment on selected small waters, the renovation program took off on a large scale in 1951, according to reports from more than a half-century ago.

"Evidence ... collected proves that the lake rehabilitation program has been extremely valuable in the overall fisheries management program. For this reason, lake and stream eradication will again resume on a large scale ..." reported Dale Henegar, then Game and Fish Department fisheries chief, in *North Dakota OUTDOORS* in 1956.

Henegar said Department fisheries staff at the time used two chemicals, toxaphene and rotenone, for renovation projects. Rotenone remains the go-to chemical for rehabilitating lakes in North Dakota today.

The black-and-white photo accompanying this piece was taken in 1960 or 1961. It features Robert Needham, a graduate student at Montana State College and native of Steele, North Dakota.

The focus of Needham's graduate work was on the effects of toxaphene on plankton and aquatic invertebrates in five North Dakota lakes, two of which were located in the Turtle Mountains where this photo was likely taken.

"The use of toxicants in fisheries management has provided considerable information concerning the effects of various poisons on fish. Much less is known of the effects on the fish food organisms," wrote Needham in his graduate thesis, a copy of which is stored at Game and Fish Department headquarters in Bismarck.

"The object of the present day study," Needham continued, "was to

determine the effects of low toxaphene concentrations on the plankton and certain other aquatic organisms under natural and controlled conditions. This was made possible by the rough fish removal program in North Dakota, during which various concentrations of toxaphene were used."

It is believed the hand pump in the photo was used to draw water samples from different depths. Some of the other gear used during research, such as a metal device used to collect "plant inhibiting organisms," was designed by Needham.

Much has changed since Needham presented his graduate thesis in 1962. For one, toxaphene, which was also used as an insecticide in parts of the country, was eventually banned in the United States for all uses.

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