

**Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission**  
**April 7-8, 2022**

Chairman Russell Olson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. CT. Commissioners Travis Bies, Julie Bartling, Jon Locken, Stephanie Rissler, Doug Sharp, Charles Spring, Robert Whitmyre were present. Public and staff were able to listen via SDPB livestream and participate via video conference or in person with approximately 80 total participants via zoom and in person.

**DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION**

**Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

Chairman Olson called for conflicts of interest to be disclosed. None were presented.

**Approval of Minutes**

Olson called for any additions or corrections to the March 3-4, 2022, regular meeting minutes.

Motion by Rissler with second by Sharp TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 3-4, 2022, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. Motion carried unanimously.

**Additional Commissioner Salary Days**

Olson called for additional salary days. None were requested.

**Second Century Habitat Fund Update**

Brian Bashore, executive director of the Second Century Habitat Fund board provided a brief update on current initiatives.

**Go Outdoors SD Update**

Ross Scott, wildlife staff specialist and Keith Fisk, program manager provided an update on Go Outdoors South Dakota.

**Recruitment/Marketing Efforts & Park Events**

April Larson, Marketing Coordinator, updated the Commission on current parks marketing efforts and events.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

The Public Hearing began at 2:00 p.m. and concluded at 2:15 p.m. The minutes follow these Commission meeting minutes.

**OPEN FORUM**

Jon Kotilnek, senior staff attorney, opened the floor for discussion from those in attendance on matters of importance to them that may not be on the agenda.

Rob Roeber – Redfield, SD – voiced concerns and made request to close property to the west as well as some additional space to allow for disabled veterans to fish Cottonwood Lake on HWY 37 on the SE side.

Chuck Dieter – Brookings, SD – inquired about NR hunting in southeast SD. If it's not broke, why are we trying to fix it. This will just replace residents with nonresidents and

doesn't think this is part of the management plan. Also, spoke about waterfowl outfitters in SD and having the commission provide some regulations. Noted SD is one of the few states that doesn't regulate guides.

Nathan Mueller – Watertown, SD & Steve Mohagrant, Milbank, SD – has applied for several years, but has difficulty reeling in a fish with loss of limb. Inquiring if it is okay to snag your own fish and have another license holder assist with reeling it in.

Julie Anderson – Rapid City, SD – spoke in opposition to the proposed shooting range on Elk Vale Road. Expressed concerns to the environment from lead at outdoor shooting ranges.

Will Stone – Gary, SD – spoke regarding the annual shooting preserve license fee requesting it be lowered.

George Vandel – Pierre, SD – concerned with adding residents to Southwest counties. If a NR takes the place of a R hunter this reduces the ability to reduce the population.

Nancy Hilding – Black Hawk, SD – Introduced SB85 for a pipeline ..... noted how beneficial beaver are to the environment. They raise the water table and the whole surface of land becomes a surface water storage area creating terrestrial and aquatic habitat. Spoke in support of a moratorium on beavers. Said people wanted 12 months instead of 6 months as it would be easier to trap beaver.

## **PETITION**

### **Apprentice and Mentored Deer Season Start Date**

Tom Kirschenmann, wildlife division director, presented the petition received from Justin Allen to change the apprentice deer dates to begin in September. Allen explained his reason as Today's youth and potential new hunters have many distractions and obstacles preventing them from getting into hunting and the outdoors. Making youth and new hunters first hunting experiences a pleasant and overall positive experience will keep them coming back for a lifetime. Opening the apprentice and mentored deer season September 1 every year will provide additional time (1-2 additional weeks) for these hunting opportunities to young and new hunters during a period of the season where weather is conducive to a quality hunting experience. These additional days would allow these hunters more time afield to pursue deer before other seasons such as grouse, pheasants, waterfowl, other deer season, etc. may affect the quality/success of their hunt and also tie up the availability of parents/family/friends/mentors who accompany these youth and new hunters. This change to the season would be a benefit to young hunters and aligns with the SD GFP departments "R3" Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation Criteria guidelines. This change should help continue to recruit, retain, and introduce young and new hunters to the great outdoors of South Dakota.

Kirschenmann explained that changes and adjustments create complexity and as for an idea to continue recruitment, not sure that its necessary to move the recruitment needle.

Motion by Bies, second by Sharp to deny the petition. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Rissler, second by Whitmyre to adopt resolution 22-08 (APPENDIX C) denying the petition. Motion carried unanimously.

## **FINALIZATIONS**

### **Elk Seasons**

#### **Custer State Park Early Archery Elk**

1. Adjust the total number of available licenses from 3 "any elk" to no more than 10 "any elk" licenses.

Switzer explained the recommended maximum number of elk licenses will be established in administrative rule and the GFP Commission via administrative action will determine specific number of licenses by tag types and allocation amongst hunting units. Updated population objectives and any recommended license adjustments will be shared at the March Commission meeting once preliminary harvest estimates have been obtained and population modeling exercises have been completed.

Motioned by Rissler, second by Whitmyre TO FINALIZE THE CHANGES TO THE CUSTER STATE PARK ARCHERY ELK SEASON. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Custer State Park Elk**

1. Adjust the total number of available licenses from 9 "any elk" licenses to no more than 15 "any elk" licenses.
2. Administrative rule clean-up for season dates.

Switzer explained the recommended maximum number of elk licenses will be established in administrative rule and the GFP Commission via administrative action will determine specific number of licenses by tag types and allocation amongst hunting units. Updated population objectives and any recommended license adjustments will be shared at the March Commission meeting once preliminary harvest estimates have been obtained and population modeling exercises have been completed. Of the nine any elk licenses issued for Custer State Park, eight will be valid specifically for Custer State Park and the ninth any elk license will be made available to a non-governmental organization as a raffle license that is valid in Custer State Park and any Black Hills elk hunting unit in which an any elk license is issued.

Motioned by Whitmyre, second by Rissler TO FINALIZE THE CHANGES TO THE CUSTER STATE PARK ELK SEASON. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Archery Elk Hunting Season**

1. Adjust the number of licenses available from 142 "any elk" and 80 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 222 licenses) to no more than 200 "any elk" and 100 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 300 licenses).

Switzer explained the recommended maximum number of elk licenses will be established in administrative rule and the GFP Commission via administrative action will determine specific number of licenses by tag types and allocation amongst hunting units. Updated population objectives and any recommended license adjustments will be shared at the March Commission meeting once preliminary harvest estimates have been obtained and population modeling exercises have been completed.

Motioned by Sharp, second by Rissler TO FINALIZE THE CHANGES TO THE ARCHERY ELK SEASON. Motion carried unanimously.

### Black Hills Elk Hunting Season

Chad Switzer, wildlife program administrator, presented the recommended changes to the elk seasons.

### Black Hills Elk

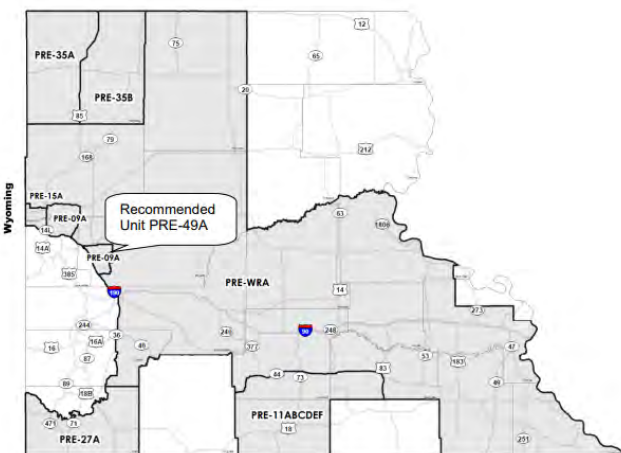
1. Adjust the total number of available licenses from 425 "any elk" and 700 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 1,125 licenses) to no more than 500 "any elk" and 1,000 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 1,500 licenses).
2. Modify the boundaries of BHE-H9A and BHE-H9B to correct unit boundary.

He explained the recommended maximum number of elk licenses will be established in administrative rule and the GFP Commission via administrative action will determine specific number of licenses by tag types and allocation amongst hunting units. Updated population objectives and any recommended license adjustments will be shared at the March Commission meeting once preliminary harvest estimates have been obtained and population modeling exercises have been completed. There is currently a small geographic area that technically does not reside in any elk hunting unit; this unit boundary modification will correct this oversight.

Motioned by Rissler, second by Whitmyre TO FINALIZE THE CHANGES TO THE BLACK HILLS ELK SEASON. Motion carried unanimously.

### Prairie Elk

1. Adjust the number of licenses available from 78 "any elk" and 178 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 256 licenses) to no more than 100 "any elk" and 300 "antlerless elk" licenses (total of 400 licenses).
2. Modify Unit PRE-9A (see map).
3. Establish a new unit (PRE-49A) to include a portion of Meade County and season dates (see map).
4. Correct season dates in administrative rule for units PRE-11B, PRE-11C, PRE-11D, PRE-35A, and PRE-35B.



Switzer explained the recommended maximum number of elk licenses will be established in administrative rule and the GFP Commission via administrative action will determine specific number of licenses by tag types and allocation amongst hunting units. Updated population objectives and any recommended license adjustments will be

shared at the March Commission meeting once preliminary harvest estimates have been obtained and population modeling exercises have been completed. The recommended changes to prairie elk hunting unit boundaries and season date changes are to improve elk management on private land and simplify season dates.

Motion by Whitmyre with second by Sharp TO FINALIZE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE PRAIRIE ELK SEASON. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Elk License Allocation

Switzer presented the administrative action to allocate licenses for the 2022-2023 elk hunting seasons.

<b>2021</b>				<b>2022-2023</b>			
<b>Black Hills Elk</b>				<b>Black Hills Elk</b>			
Unit	Resident Licenses			Unit	Resident Licenses		
	Any Elk	Atl Elk			Any Elk	Atl Elk	
	21	23			21	23	
H1A	50			H1A	60		
H1B		15		H1B		65	
H2A	240			H2A	290		
H2B		25		H2B		50	
H2C				H2C		50	
H2D				H2D			
H2E		50		H2E		40	
H2F				H2F		40	
H2G				H2G		40	
H2H		5		H2H		10	
H2I		15		H2I		10	
H2J		15		H2J		10	
H3A	100			H3A	120		
H3B		30		H3B		45	
H3C		30		H3C		45	
H3D		30		H3D		45	
H3E		60		H3E		60	
H3F		60		H3F		60	
H3G		60		H3G		60	
H4A	20			H4A	20		
H4B		40		H4B		40	
H5A	5			H5A	5		
H7A	20			H7A	25		
H7B		15		H7B		20	
H9A	15			H9A	15		
H9B		40		H9B		40	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>1,265</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>Contingency</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>Archery Elk</b>				<b>Archery Elk</b>			
Unit	Resident Licenses			Unit	Resident Licenses		
	Any Elk	Atl Elk			Any Elk	Atl Elk	
	21	23			21	23	
H1A	20	10		H1A	30	20	
H2A	80	40		H2A	100	40	
H3A	35	20		H3A	40	30	
H4A				H4A			
H5A	2			H5A	2		

H7A	10			H7A	10		
H9A				H9A			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>272</b>

<b>2021</b>				<b>2022-2023</b>			
<b>Prairie Elk</b>				<b>Prairie Elk</b>			
Unit	Resident Licenses			Unit	Resident Licenses		
	Any Elk	Atl Elk			Any Elk	Atl Elk	
	21	23			21	23	
9A	10	15		9A	4		
11A		18		11A		5	
11B	16			11B	16		
11C	16			11C	16		
11D		30		11D		30	
11E		30		11E		10	
11F		30		11F			
15A	8			15A	8		
15B		5		15B		5	
27A	10	10		27A	20	20	
35A	4	8		35A	10		
35B	4	12		35B	8		
35C				35C		15	
35D				35D		15	
35E				35E		20	
35F				35F		20	
49A				49A	10	15	
WRA	10	20		WRA	10	20	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>277</b>
<b>Custer State Park</b>				<b>Custer State Park</b>			
Season	Resident Licenses			Season	Resident Licenses		
	Any Elk	Atl Elk			Any Elk	Atl Elk	
	21	23			21	23	
CEE-CU1	3			CEE-CU1	4		
CUE-CU1	9			CUE-CU1	12		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>16</b>

Motioned by Rissler, second by Whitmyre TO FINALIZE THE ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION ALLOCATING ELK LICENSES BY SEASONS AND UNITS. Motion carried unanimously.

### Missouri River (Pierre) Waterfowl Refuge

Kirschenmann presented the recommended change to withdraw proposal and retain current refuge boundary. He explained the Commission denied a petition submitted by the South Dakota Migratory and Upland Gamebird Association as a component of the petition was to include a 50-year clause. The Commission, however, did develop a proposal that includes the addition to the Oahe Dam State Waterfowl Refuge as requested by the petitioner and believes the requested additions to the Oahe Dam State Waterfowl Refuge deserve an opportunity for public comment. It is unknown if the proposed refuge change will enhance waterfowl hunting opportunities in the Pierre/Ft. Pierre area at a level greater than the current public hunting opportunities that would be taken away. In addition, the total area in the proposed refuge expansion and removal of public access for waterfowl hunting opportunities is 14,768 acres; a 444% increase in size that includes 11,704 acres of water and 3,064 acres of land. The

proposed refuge expansion would remove shoreline hunting that includes 24.2 miles upstream and 24.5 miles downstream of Oahe Dam.

Motion by Whitmyre, second by Bartling TO REJECT THE PROPOSAL. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Bighorn Sheep**

Switzer presented the recommended changes to the bighorn sheep hunting season.

1. Increase the number of “ram bighorn sheep” licenses from 8 to 11.
2. Change the mandatory orientation meeting from “preceding the opening day of the season” to “preceding the first day of hunting by the license holder”.

He explained that due to the recent *M. ovi* pneumonia outbreak in Unit 3, both the Department and Badlands National Park recommend issuing no licenses in this unit. Based on the strong numbers of ram bighorn sheep across all age classes, the increase to the number of licenses being recommended in Custer State Park will not negatively affect the viewability of bighorn sheep for park visitors and will provide additional hunting opportunities. Modifying the requirement for the mandatory hunter orientation will provide better customer service to those licensed hunters. In addition to the licenses allocated by units above, the Department recommends the auction license to be valid in Units 2, 4, and Custer State Park.

Motion by Sharp with second by Spring TO FINALIZE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE BIGHORN SHEEP SEASON. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Lake Francis Case Walleye Regulations**

Jake Davis, Fisheries Program Administrator, presented recommended changes to fishing season rules to remove the special regulations on Lake Francis Case from the northern Gregory-Charles Mix County line downstream to Fort Randall Dam which require that anglers cannot release back to the water walleye that are caught through the ice and that length limits do not apply when fishing through the ice. These changes would standardize fishing regulations on Lake Francis Case and Lake Sharpe. He explained current walleye regulations for the lower portion of Lake Francis Case, while fishing through the ice, include:

1. The first four walleyes caught must be kept
2. The 15-inch minimum length limit does not apply

A proposal was made by the commission at their January 2022 meeting, in response to a petition, that would remove the requirement that the first four walleyes caught be kept, while fishing through the ice in the lower portion of Lake Francis Case. The proposal, with the department recommended changes, would remove the existing walleye harvest restriction requiring anglers to not release any walleye caught while fishing through the ice in the lower portion of Lake Francis Case. It would also remove the exemption to the 15-inch minimum length limit in effect when fishing through the ice in this portion of the reservoir, meaning the 15-inch minimum length limit would be in effect for all areas of Lake Francis Case from September 1 through June 30. Specific regulations for walleye harvest when fishing through the ice on the lower end of Lake Francis Case were enacted in 2001 in response to public concern over high mortality of walleye caught from deep water and then released. The intent of the regulations was to reduce post-release mortalities by prohibiting release of walleye and limiting the number

of walleyes caught during a fishing trip. There is evidence to support the idea that post-release mortality increases at deeper depths. The special walleye harvest regulations for the lower portion of Lake Francis Case, when fishing through the ice, is the only case in the state where a regulation specifically requiring fish to be harvested exists because of potential post-release mortality. However, the same issue occurs at other locations during various times of the year, including in the lower portion of Lake Francis Case during the summer.

Motioned by Locken, second by Spring TO FINALIZE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGE AS PRESENTED. Roll Call Vote: Bartling – No, Bies – Yes, Locken – Yes, , Rissler – Yes, Sharp – Yes, Spring – Yes, Whitmyre – Yes, Olson – Yes. Motion passed 7-1

### **Public Waters**

Jacquie Ermer, wildlife regional supervisor and Al Nedved, parks assistant director, presented the recommended change to remove no boating zones and allow for non-motorized watercraft within the Waubay National Wildlife Refuge and the Waubay State Game Bird Refuge, establish a no wake zone at a new boat ramp at Lake Poinsett State Recreation Area in Brookings County, modify the no wake zone at the Belle Fourche Reservoir in Butte County to include all boat ramps. The noted change from the original proposal was to modify the use of existing safety zone definitions currently in rule.

Motioned by Sharp, second by Whitmyre TO FINALIZE THE MODIFICATION TO THE PROPOSAL AS PRESENTED. Motion carried unanimously.

### **License Agent Processes**

Keith Fisk, program manager, presented the recommended change to modify two administrative rules to align new business practices with GFP's new licensing system and requirements. To adjust electronic ACH transfers, processes, and timeframe for payments and remove the use of Emergency Authorization books. He explained GFP will be launching the new licensing system on December 15, 2021. Once this occurs, license agents will be required to work within new business practices (i.e. electronic ACH transfers and different timeframes when the electronic money sweeps occur) to continue to be a license agent for GFP. License agents serve an important role for selling licenses on behalf of GFP as well as providing hunters with the ability to purchase hunting and fishing licenses outside normal business hours that GFP offices are open. As technology advances, the ability to sell paper hunting and fishing licenses is no longer needed. Customers will be able to purchase licenses online (through GFP's licensing website) or by visiting a license agent or by calling GFP's call center.

Motion by Rissler, second by Bartling TO FINALIZE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO LICENSING SYSTEM. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Cancellation Policy**

Scott Simpson, division director, presented the recommended changes to allow for cancellation of campsites and lodging facilities without fee for a period of time after a reservation is made. After that period has elapsed, a fee of one-half of the first night's camping or lodging fees will be assessed for both types of overnight use. This rule proposal helps simplify cancellation policies and associated fees by providing one



cancellation procedure for campsites, and one for lodging facilities and Custer State Park French Creek Horse Camp. Simpson further explained The Department's cancellation policy was developed at a time of lower demand for camping and lodging facilities, and the ability to resell those facilities was more difficult. The current procedure is to assess a cancellation fee of one-night's camping or \$25 for cabins/lodges effective immediately after the reservation is made. With the increased demand for camping and lodging facilities, the ability to fill those vacancies left by cancellations is much more likely. This change will also help the Department be more consistent with industry cancellation standards and allow more flexibility of users to cancel a reservation without penalty due to unforeseen circumstances.

Motioned by Rissler, second by Bies TO FINALIZE THE CHANGES TO THE CAMPING RESERVATION FEES. Motion carried unanimously.

## **PROPOSALS**

### **Public Waters – Indian Springs**

Jacque Ermer, wildlife regional supervisor, presented the recommended change to

1. Modify applicable dates and the area included in "no discharge of a firearm from a boat" of Indian Springs and Antelope Lakes in Clark County.
2. Modify applicable dates and the area included in the closure of fishing from a boat of Indian Springs and Antelope Lakes in Clark County.

She explained that in 2017, HB1001 tasked the SD Game Fish and Parks to work on agreements with landowners on nonmeandered water issues. One such agreement was with a landowner on Indian Springs Lake in Clark County. The current rule was put into place in 2018 after discussions with a landowner who owned most of the flooded private property in the Indian Springs basin. It was the opportunity to balance the request of the landowner and the public recreational use of Indian Springs Lake. Landownership has changed hands since the original agreement. Due to water levels increasing in the area, the new landowner has requested to simplify the boundaries of the current area closed to "discharging a firearm or fishing from a boat" on Indian Springs to also include the waters of Antelope Lake. Antelope Lake is currently designated as a State Waterfowl Refuge. As part of this request, the landowner also agreed to change the start date in the current rules 41:04:02:12b and 14:07:02:01b to October 20th, giving sportsmen and women an additional 10 days in the fall to hunt and fish from a boat while allowing the water to be open to public recreational use during the winter, spring, and summer months. This date would also align with boating regulations on other state refuges. Indian Springs Lake is a non-meandered body of water thus is subject to landowner request to close it to recreational use if so desires. By GFP staff working with the current landowners, Indian Springs Lake can remain open to public recreational activities with minimal restrictions for 2 months vs being shut down year-round.

### **Waterfowl Seasons**

#### **Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season**

Chad Switzer, Wildlife Administrator, presented no recommended changes to the youth waterfowl season.

#### **Duck Hunting Season**

Switzer presented the recommended changes to the duck hunting season as follows:

1. Remove daily bag limit of 5 mergansers (including 2 hooded mergansers) and include all mergansers in the normal duck daily bag limit.
2. Remove the possession limit of mergansers and include all mergansers in the normal duck possession limit.
3. Remove the ability to transfer certain nonresident licenses after a specific date.

He explained these recommended changes cleans up administrative rules for the implementation of the experimental options available to duck hunters. The allowance to transfer certain nonresident licenses after a specific date is unnecessarily complex and creates difficulties with the administration of licenses as well as creates confusion with hunters.

### Early Fall Canada Goose

Switzer presented the recommended change to remove restriction for nonresident hunters in the counties of Beadle, Brookings, Hanson, Kingsbury, Lake, Lincoln, McCook, Miner, Moody, Sanborn, Turner, Union, and Minnehaha counties.

Goose Hunting Season, August Management Take and Special Canada Goose Hunting season.

Switzer presented no recommended changes to the goose hunting season.

### Common Snipe

Switzer presented no recommended changes to the snipe season.

### Tundra Swan Hunting Season

Switzer presented no recommended changes to the tundra swan season.

### Sandhill Crane

Switzer presented no recommended changes to the sandhill crane.

### Waterfowl Hunting Season

Switzer presented no recommended changes to the waterfowl hunting season.

### **License Forms and Fees**

Switzer presented the recommended change to remove the inclusion of the state migratory bird certification permit with the nonresident spring snow goose, nonresident early fall Canada goose licenses, nonresident 3-day licenses, nonresident youth waterfowl licenses and decrease applicable license fees by \$5 each. He explained that currently, several nonresident waterfowl licenses include the migratory bird certification permit. With the 2-tiered duck license option, applicants must select a migratory bird certification permit to reflect their choice of the traditional or 3-duck license option and pay the \$5 fee for the applicable migratory bird certification permit.

## **Application for License**

Switzer presented the recommended changes to the license application as follows:

1. Remove the requirement for unlimited access permits for archery, muzzleloader, mentor, youth, and apprentice deer license holders to hunt certain deer hunting units and public lands.
2. Limit the number of archery access permits for Unit WRD-27L to no more than 20 "any deer" access permits for residents and no more than 5 "any deer" access permits for nonresidents.

He explained research on R3 efforts (i.e., Recruitment, Reactivation, Retention) has identified rule/regulation complexity to be one of several obstacles for new sportsmen and women. The removal of these access permits will greatly simplify hunting regulations regarding mentor, archery, muzzleloader, youth, and apprentice deer license holders while having no impact to deer management in these areas. The number of access permits currently available, across all these seasons, has created unnecessary complexity for sportsmen and women as well as the administration of these access permits in the licensing system. Unlimited access permits were established with the intent to evaluate harvest and participation on specific management areas by deer hunters with statewide or region-wide (e.g., West River Archery Deer) license types including archery, muzzleloader, mentor, youth, and apprentice license types. Deer harvest and participation was evaluated on all areas that required an access permit in 2019 and results were presented to the Commission. As a result, the Commission took action to limit archery deer access permits to 500 residents and 125 nonresidents on management unit 35L and no other unlimited license types or access permit areas were limited. Since 2019, no changes have been made to the number of access permits available for archery deer hunters in management unit 35L and no further changes have been made to the unlimited access permit areas. Through the 2021 deer hunting season, hunting effort and harvest success by access permit users has been collected, providing sufficient baseline information regarding use on these areas. Harvest and success by hunters with statewide or region-wide license types will continue to be estimated at the firearm deer management unit level. In the event there is a desire to consider limiting access permits on additional areas and user groups, harvest and success data will be used to evaluate use by user groups on these areas beginning the 2022 deer hunting season. This change will simplify deer hunting regulations for statewide and region-wide deer license type user groups and reduce complexity of the deer licensing system. Limited access units (LAUs) are intended to reduce hunter densities and provide a quality hunt experience. Trend data of supports limiting the number of resident and nonresident archery access permits for Unit WRD-27L to help meet its LAU objective. In addition, a reduction in archery deer harvest will help meet the 80% firearm hunter success goal identified in the deer management plan for LAUs.

## **Mentor Turkey Recruitment**

Kirschenmann presented the recommended change to establish new rules within the Spring Turkey Hunting Season chapter that provides for Mentored Youth Turkey Recruitment licenses. He explained the objective of this proposal is to provide a means of encouraging youth participation with non-governmental organizations (NGO) that promote wildlife conservation and the recruitment, retention, and reactivation of hunters. Currently for youth hunters, an unlimited number of mentored spring and fall turkey licenses are available for those youth under the age of 16 and valid statewide wherever

a spring or fall turkey season is open, excluding Custer State Park. In addition, those youth who are 12 years of age who has completed a GFP's course of instruction in the safe handling of firearms are eligible to apply for limited draw prairie turkey licenses and to purchase an archery and/or Black Hills turkey license. A mentored youth turkey recruitment license sponsored by an NGO would be available to those youth 15 years of age and younger that do not already possess any type of spring turkey hunting license. A limited number of licenses would be made available by application to eligible NGOs for distribution.

Motioned by Bies, second by Whitmyre TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGE FOR MENTORED YOUTH TURKEY RECRUITMENT LICENSES. Motion carried unanimously.

## **DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

### **Dock 44 – Controlling Interest Approval**

Sean Blanchette, program specialist, presented the Commission with a resolution to allow one partner of the current concessionaire at Dock 44 to assume the lease under a new LLC.

Motioned by Whitmyre, second by Bartling TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 22-07 (APPENDIX A)

### **Snowmobile Season Recap**

Ryan Raynor, district park supervisor, informed the commission on the snowmobile season.

### **Spring Creek Marina Update**

Pat Buscher, district park supervisor, provided an update on spring creek marina.

### **Lake Oahe Water Levels**

Al Nedved provided an update on the low water levels on Lake Oahe.

### **Major Parks Construction Projects for 2022**

Al Nedved provided an update on all major parks construction projects for 2022.

### **Camping, Visitation and Revenue Report**

Al Nedved, Deputy Director for Parks presented monthly camping, visitation, and revenue reports.

## **DIVISION OF WILDLIFE**

### **Nelson-Hendrickson GPA Exchange**

Paul Coughlin, terrestrial habitat program, presented a GPA land exchange in Day County to swap the 200-acre Nelson-Hendrickson GPA valued at \$244,000 for the 240-acre Althoff property valued at \$244,000.

Motioned by Whitmyre, second by Locken TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 22-06 (APPENDIX B) APPROVING THE 200 ACRE LAND EXCHANGE IN DAY COUNTY.

## **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Update**

Chad Switzer, wildlife program manager, provided an update on the avian influenza outbreak that included a disease overview, symptoms, history, information on public health and safety, response, and current status. To date, avian influenza has been detected in Canada geese, snow geese, Ross's geese, lesser scaup, great-horned owls, red-tailed hawks, and bald eagles. Approximately 30 commercial turkey farms, one table egg layer and one backyard poultry facility has been impacted by the disease. Department staff, in cooperation with USDA-APHIS, have assisted with numerous commercial turkey farms by providing technical assistance and deterrent supplies for poultry owners to haze migrating waterfowl away from their operations. At this time, this outbreak is not expected to impact wild bird populations to the point of a population altering event.

## **Habitat Stamp Projects**

Jason Jungwirth, senior wildlife biologist, and Paul Coughlin, wildlife program manager, presented the Commission with information regarding Aquatic and Terrestrial Habitat Stamp funded projects, including both accomplishments from 2020-21 and upcoming projects and efforts planned and underway for 2022. Terrestrial habitat projects planned for 2022 on Game Production Areas across the state total a \$2.7 million investment in habitat and public access. Aquatic projects planned for 2022 is an aggressive list with projects ranging from access improvements to dam repairs to habitat projects intended to improve fisheries.

## **Habitat Management on GPA's**

Owen McElroy (Regional Habitat Program Manager) and Dan Sternhagen (Regional Terrestrial Resource Supervisor) gave a presentation over the different habitat management techniques used on Game Production Areas. Topics that were covered were Woody Habitat Planting, Invasive Woody Habitat Removal, Grassland Planting Methods, Grassland Management Techniques (Burning, Grazing, and Haying), and Typical Food Plots used.

## **Sunfish Catchability**

Brian Blackwell, fisheries biologist, provided a powerpoint presentation explaining angler catches of hybrid sunfish (male bluegill x female green sunfish) were evaluated from a hatchery pond to determine the feasibility of hybrid sunfish for use in community fishing ponds. Angler catches of hybrid sunfish were highest during the fishing event immediately after stocking, and lower catches occurred in subsequent fishing events. Learned behavior (i.e., hook avoidance) likely resulted in reduced catch rates. The percentage of fish caught from the first stocking increased following the second stocking of 100 fish. The increase was probably facilitated by the newly stocked fish feeding on the angler's offerings. Angler catches were greatest during the first 20 minutes of fishing. Hybrid sunfish have the potential for use in community ponds but will require supplemental stockings, and during fishing clinics, all participants should fish at the same time.

## **License Sales Update**

Tom Kirschenmann, wildlife division director, provided an update on resident and nonresident license sales.

**Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Robling', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin Robling, Department Secretary

**Public Hearing Minutes of the Game, Fish and Parks Commission  
April 7, 2022**

The Commission chairman Russell Olson began the public hearing at 2:00 p.m. CT. Commissioners Julie Bartling, Travis Bies, Jon Locken, Russell Olson, Stephanie Rissler, Doug Sharp, Charles Spring, and Robert Whitmyre were present. Kotilnek indicated written comments were provided to the Commissioners prior to this time and will be reflected in the Public Hearing Minutes. Kotilnek then invited the public to come forward with oral testimony. Written comments attached.

**Elk Seasons**

No verbal comments

**Missouri River (Pierre) Waterfowl Refuge**

George Vandel – Pierre, SD – noted heavily used area for the public. This situation the evidence that all hunters will benefit is just not there. If this is connected it will force hunters onto public land. Noted sometimes landowners providing access pull out of WIA contracts. This is not good for the public or R3 of waterfowl hunters.

Nancy Hilding – Black Hawk, SD – the IRRC doesn't mind if you change the rule about your public notice. Says she submitted her letter and doesn't see her letter. Letter includes a map of the Pierre Missouri River bottom and concern of area that this area should be of protected status. This area has 3 sections that are included in the waterfowl proposal. It is an important bird area and if changes are made per the proposal, she recommends alternate areas be designated as refuge.

**Bighorn Sheep**

No verbal or written comments

**Lake Francis Case Walleye Regulations**

No verbal comments

**Public Waters**

No verbal comments

**License Agent Processes**

No verbal comments

**Cancellation Policy**

No verbal comments

The public Hearing concluded at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Robling', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kevin Robling, Department Secretary



## Appendix A

### RESOLUTION 22 - 07

WHEREAS, Dock 44 is operated by A&E Marina, LLC., under the terms and conditions of a Concession Agreement with the Department of Game, Fish and Parks dated April 3, 2017 as authorized by the Game, Fish and Parks Commission for the marina, restaurant, lodging and retail facilities; and

WHEREAS, the existing two partners of A&E Marina LLC., have agreed to terms of sale of the membership interest of one partner in the LLC to the other partner; and,

WHEREAS, the remaining partner has filed for a name change of A&E Marina, LLC. to Dock 44 Marina, LLC.; and;

WHEREAS, the remaining partner desires to continue to operate the Dock 44 concession operation under the terms of the existing Concession Agreement dated April 3, 2017; and,

WHEREAS, the Department concurs with the change in ownership status, the change in name of the LLC., as well as the continued operation of Dock 44 via the remaining existing partner; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with ARSD 41:13, a transfer of controlling interest in the Concession Agreement between existing partners is subject to written approval of the Game, Fish and Parks Commission,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the GFP Commission does hereby approve the transfer of the interest in the Dock 44 Concession Agreement dated April 3, 2017 from A&E Marina, LLC. to Dock 44 Marina, LLC.

**Appendix B**  
**RESOLUTION 22 - 06**

WHEREAS, the State of South Dakota (held by and for the use and benefit of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks (GFP)) owns an interest in real estate described as:

W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 7 and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 18, all in Township 123 North, Range 56 West of the 5th P.M., Day County SD; containing 200 acres, more or less, hereinafter referred to as GFP PROPERTY, which is valued at \$244,000.00; and

WHEREAS, Earl Althoff, Trustee of the Earl Althoff Revocable Living Trust (ALTHOFF), 44474 139A Street, Waubay, SD 57273, owns an interest in real estate described as:

E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 8 and NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 17, all in Township 123 North, Range 56 West of the 5th P.M., Day County SD, containing 240 acres, more or less, hereinafter referred to as ALTHOFF PROPERTY, which is valued at \$244,000.00; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota law (SDCL 41-2-29.2) provides that GFP has the power, authority, and duty to trade or exchange real property owned by the State and held by GFP if the GFP Commission shall first determine that real property more suitable to GFP purposes may be obtained by an exchange, provided the parcels of real property to be exchanged are of equal value; and

WHEREAS, GFP and ALTHOFF desire to exchange interests in GFP PROPERTY and ALTHOFF PROPERTY, and the GFP Commission having determined that ALTHOFF PROPERTY is more suitable to GFP for GFP purposes than GFP PROPERTY, and that GFP PROPERTY and ALTHOFF PROPERTY are of equal value as determined by a qualified appraiser; and

WHEREAS, South Dakota law requires that the conveyance of GFP PROPERTY be approved and executed in the manner provided by SDCL 5-2-11. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the GFP Commission hereby takes final action on and approves the above referenced exchanges of the above described parcels of real property and hereby directs GFP to take all steps necessary to effectuate the exchange of GFP PROPERTY for ALTHOFF PROPERTY under procedures mandated by statute.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the GFP Commission does hereby ratify and confirm the Department's designation of the ALTHOFF PROPERTY being acquired pursuant to the exchange authorized by this Resolution for utilization by the Division of Wildlife for the purpose of game production and, further, does hereby expressly designate and classify the ALTHOFF PROPERTY being acquired pursuant to the exchange authorized by this Resolution for use as a game production area.

**Appendix C**  
**RESOLUTION 22-08**

WHEREAS, Justin Allen of Pierre, South Dakota, submitted a Petition to the Game, Fish and Parks Commission (Commission) dated April 1, 2022, requesting that the Commission amend ARSD § 41:06:44:01 and 41:06:63:01 (Apprentice, Mentored and Youth deer) to move the start date for the apprentice, mentored and youth deer hunting season to September 1<sup>st</sup> for the reasons more fully set out in the petition (hereinafter referred to as “the Petition”); and

WHEREAS, all members of the Commission have been furnished with and have reviewed a copy of the Petition; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been advised that a copy of the Petition has been served on all members of the Interim Rules Review Committee and Director of the Legislative Research Council as required by SDCL § 1-26-13; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been advised that SDCL § 1-26-13 requires that within thirty (30) days of submission of a Petition, the Commission shall either “deny the petition in writing (stating its reasons for the denials) or shall initiate rule-making proceedings in accordance with SDCL 1-26-4.”; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been advised and is of the opinion that a hearing on the Petition is neither statutorily required nor necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has reviewed and carefully considered the requirements and procedures set out in SDCL §1-26-13 and the contents of the Petition, including the reasons advanced by the Petitioner in support of changing the start date to September 1<sup>st</sup> for apprentice, mentored, and youth deer hunting; and

WHEREAS, the change requested in the petition would overlap with other season start dates and potentially create conflict with other users; and

WHEREAS, the current season structure offers ample opportunity and is not a hinderance to hunter recruitment efforts; and

WHEREAS, this will be a topic to be further discussed through the public comment for the revised deer management action plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission does hereby deny the Petition for the reasons hereinabove stated in this Resolution, which said Resolution as adopted by the Commission shall constitute the Commission’s written denial of the Petition and its reasons therefore.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Petition, a record of the Commission’s discussions concerning same, and this Resolution be made a part of the Minutes of the Commission meeting at which this Resolution is adopted, and further, that the Department be and it is hereby authorized and directed in compliance with SDCL §1-26-13 to serve a copy of an extract of that portion of the Commission minutes which pertain to the Commission’s discussion of the Petition and its adoption of this Resolution, including a copy of the Resolution, on all members of the Interim Rules Review Committee and Director of the Legislative Research Council with copies also to be provided to the Petitioner, Justin Allen of Pierre, South Dakota.

# Public Comments

## Cancellation Policy

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**Karleen Dagit**

**Lead SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I was charged \$168.00 for a cancellation from June 6-9 at Blue Bell Campground for two rustic cabins and one tent site. By mistake the reservation clerk did only 2 nights, so I needed to make another reservation for the third night! Quite upset and feel this is terribly unfair since they were so hard to get in the first place back in January and needing to cancel because of medical necessities. A total or much smaller refund would help me and so many others. Will never book again if this policy is not changed.

## Elk Season

---

**Ron Schauer**

**Crooks SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am opposed to the large increase in proposed elk licenses in the Black Hills units. This is too large an increase and will result in a drastic decrease in overall elk populations in the hills. Resulting in substantial decreases down the road. This same scenario was used several years ago, and the results were not good. I am not against increasing tag numbers but not at the rate proposed. The second area of comment involves the CSP elk proposal. I do not understand why there are no cow elk licenses proposed? With all the black hills units surrounding the park proposing increases in any and cow elk tags, why not propose a "few" cow tags in the park. It is my firm belief that having a few cow tags in the park (5-10) would not effect the overall elk population and allow those people sitting on many years preference have a possible opportunity to draw a cow tag. Thanks you for your time and consideration.  
Ron Schauer, retired GFP employee.

---

**Kelly Koistinen**

**Spearfish SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am opposed to the allocation of Elk Licenses to non-residents who own land within SD, but don't live in SD. The Elk are for SD residents only! Don't allow non-residents to hunt elk in South Dakota. It is reserved ONLY for the citizens of this state. If the G, F, &P allows non-residents who own land, to hunt elk in this state, then the next step will be allowing non-residents to hunt here in SD also! I'm not in favor of allocation of elk licenses to any non-resident!

---

**Caitlin Gust**

**Hermosa SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Dustin Rice**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am writing in response to the proposal of increasing Elk tags across the Black Hills as I strongly oppose this increase, specifically for the September and October Black Hills hunting seasons. Having the privilege of hunting elk the past 5 years here, either with a tag or with family/friends who have drawn tags, I am a little worried about what the extra pressure will do to the quality/age class of the bulls and more importantly what it will do to the quality of hunt hunters will get to experience. I am all for getting more people elk tags but I don't feel we should hold these hunts in the category of "opportunity hunting". With hunters, on average, waiting into the high teens to draw these tags we need to retain the top-quality hunt and animals the Black Hills is known for while not having to battle crowds of people in doing so. We must remember the pressure each additional tag is going to present not only during the hunting seasons but also during scouting season. We cannot blame the rifle hunters who are out scouting during archery season, but every extra tag holder just compounds on the pressure these animals experience. If this is an actual high population issue, I am all for the December hunting seasons as I think that is an excellent way of managing a herd size.

Having also hunted elk in other states (Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming) over the past 6 years and there is nothing that compares to the quality of hunt that the Black Hills provides. I really hope we don't make the mistake of trying to make this hunt an "opportunity hunt" just trying to please a few people who believe they deserve a tag. We have created a truly special hunt here in South Dakota so let's not ruin it.

---

**Wayne Johnson**

**Vetal SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Qualifying Landowners, with a minimum 10,000 dollars of provable actual damages per year, need to have at least one transferable Any Elk license every year.

Reduce the Any Elk licenses by a minimum of 50% for the PRE-11 units.

Structure a different set of guidelines and regulations for Prairie Elk as opposed to Black Hills Elk. The vast majority of the land in the Black Hills is Public, while the vast majority of Prairie is Private Land. One size doesn't necessarily fit all.

If these three changes are not made, there will be no free Elk access of any kind on the Wayne Johnson Ranch for the foreseeable future.

## Lake Francis Case Walleye Regulations

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**Bill Barnett**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

## License Forms and Fees

---

**Timothy Mueller**

**Omaha NE**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

You should offer a discounted price for seniors on non resident fishing and hunting permits ,I've purchased a SD fishing liscence for over 30 years consecutive 8f you want us to keep growing the sport and bringing our families ,you should consider this

---

**Kurt Van Vleet**

**Redfield SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

To Whom it may concern, I have several spring snow goose hunters during March and April. It is very for me to try and explain why South Dakota has a Habitat Fee for this Spring Conservation hunt. This is a migratory bird. Can you please explain what habitat is needed for them. Thank You for your time. Kurt Van Vleet with Pheasant Country Lodging 605-460-1423

## Missouri River Pierre Waterfowl Refuge

---

**Jason Rumpca**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I pass shot geese in January and February by the dam. I also live near the water in Pierre and keep tabs on the migration and geese on Sharpe. I witnessed fisherman in boats below the dam fishing by the bridges and the mouth of the stillin basin. Boats do not move geese out of the area. Geese would move slightly if boats drove right next to them, but that's about it. Geese are not moved out of the area due to boat access. There are plenty of refuges up and down the river around Pierre. Adding the proposed refuge will not change the pattern of geese in the area, but it will clearly limit access to public hunting. Please do not add the proposed refuge.

---

**Thomas Kallemeyn**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Aaron Rumpca**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I don't think this is a rational solution to decreased birds numbers. They currently have enough water habitat. Lake Oahe and Sharpe are huge. People barely pressure these birds on the water as it is. This will just limit public hunting to our youth. Private land owners need to stop and even reverse drain tiling. This will actually help waterfowl habitat and let the birds flourish. Just look around in the winter. It's grazed to nothing and farmed from ditch to ditch. Heck even the ditches a cut. Habit is everything. How many nests do Stephens farm over in the spring? Let's do a study.

---

**Bob Brandt**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

This is a terrible proposal; it takes more publicly accessible land from the average SD hunter and forces us to go to high priced pay to hunt outfits. They already get away with baiting geese to their land, now they want you to restrict or ban hunting on thousands of acres of accessible land. This would have been a bad proposal when the geese population was high, but it is especially bad with the waterfowl numbers very low. Goose hunting on public land around Pierre has always been a very tough hunt, this bad proposal would make it much harder. I am 68 years old and have been hunting in SD since I was 12. Everyone wants to increase the numbers of new, and younger hunters, this bad proposal will restrict their opportunity to hunt geese on thousands of acres of land that has historically been available to the average hunter. Please defeat this proposal. Thank you for your consideration. Bob Brandt

---

**Felix Recek**

**Elkhorn NE**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Why have a early season for Canada geese when you people are trying to protect them

---

**Sam Sommers**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Waterfront need roosting areas ! Keep working on making this happen. Thanks Sam

---

**Pat Malcomb**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I strongly oppose closing PUBLIC land to goose hunters. Why is this even being seriously discussed, its a money grab by an outfitter that will backfire. Those of us that hunt this public land will never pay to hunt, we will just quit hunting the Pierre area altogether. As sportsman we have the right to hunt land we helped pay for vote know to this proposal

---

**Kyle Villa**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Bill Barnett**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I do not care about Pierre and the area landowners and their friends. Gave up on Pierre hunting waterfowl years ago unfortunately the GF&P rule making disease has moved over to NE South Dakota the past 20 years and soon I will be done hunting any waterfowl as a freelance public access resident hunter of 50 years in South Dakota. Our state elected and appointed officials have done miserable job and do not even listen to their own subject matter experts for guidance for example John Cooper and Bill Antonides. As a landowner in Spink County I have not placed one piece of Drain Tile in the ground and this fall the NRCS office of Redfield will help me enroll our crop ground into CRP. Similar direct Action On the GFP has to been done to reverse the ongoing depletion & mismanagement of access to public resources and growth of privatization of natural resources impacting South Dakota residents. Signing OFF the "Last of the Mohicans" . Pray for Ukraine. To be subjugated is wrong.



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**Marlin Fallon**

**Ft.Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**James Bowers**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Your proposal to increase the area of the Pierre Waterfowl refuge will DECREASE waterfowl hunting opportunity for our community. Why, given the projection of the decrease in the popularity of waterfowl hunting and thus a decrease in funding, would you want to take away opportunities to hunt? South Dakota should be considering ELIMINATING some refuges, and INCREASING hunting opportunity. This proposal does not add to the quality of life here. Quite the opposite actually, it decreases quality of life for local residences.

---

**Susan Leach**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Pat Malcomb**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

# Other

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**Nancy Hilding**

**Black Hawk SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Nancy Hilding  
President  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 788  
Black Hawk, SD 57718  
Feb 27th, 2022

We oppose proceeding with buying the proposed shooting complex property at Meade County off Elk Vale Rd at this time. We fear the site may be too hilly to adequately provide of control of lead, especially in the north unit. We believe there will be many other adverse environmental impacts. The draft EA is totally inadequate and does not support a FONSI. We doubt you have figured out the true cost yet, because you have not factored in the full costs of environmental mitigation,

You should wait to purchase until after the National Environmental Policy Act review is complete and the USFWS issues a FONSI or a ROD, so you can adequately understand all the costs, of this site.

Thanks,

Nancy Hilding  
President  
PHAS

---

**David Johnston**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I do not support the building of a new shooting range north of Rapid City. We have a shooting range down by Hot Springs. If we need something better, use the money to improve and expand that range.

---

**Cheryl Whetham**

**Hill City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am writing to oppose the 175 Bay shooting range planned in Meade County, close to Pennington county. I am against spending \$5 million taxpayer dollars for an item that a small percentage of the population will use or benefit from. In addition to spending taxpayers dollars, there is a concern for noise, safety and the environmental impact of being so close to Elk Creek. A better use of 5 million taxpayer dollars would be to give people some property tax relief.

---

**Chloye Anderson**

**Rapid City, SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Article in March 2, 2021, Rapid City Journal. GF&P looks to purchase land for gun range.

Mr Scull purchase land in late 2020. He then transferred the purchase agreement for the purchase agreement to parks and Wildlife Foundation. The foundation completed the transaction on March 25, 2021.

Apparently This deal has been a year in the making and the newspaper public is just being informed.

Between purchase date and transfer date who is responsible for property payments and land taxes, Mr. Scull or GF&P and Wildlife Foundation? Years ago the city of Sturgis , SD tried to have a gun range built. Location to close to Bear Butte and Rally bikers bar and campgrounds. No gun range was built in Sturgis.

Today the House Appropriations

Committee is meeting for funding of the bill.

If it is voted down, who will be paying for this property now?

Thank you for reading my comments

Sincerely, Chloye M. Anderson

---

**Jackie Dittman**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

See attached letter for meeting in Pierre Friday regarding the shooting range.

Thank you.

---

**Jackie Dittman**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Sorry to be a bother, but I am hoping to switch the previous version of my letter regarding the shooting range to this version.

Thank you so much!

Jackie

---

**Scott Wright**

**Hermosa SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

AS a Hunt Safe instructor we have always needed a safe structured(shooting range) place to allow kids to shoot, let alone what a place to educate it would be! It would also be a huge boost to western South Dakota's economy. Please make this range happen! Thank you for your time.

---

**Leland Breedlove**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Please do whatever is necessary to facilitate the development of the Meade county shooting range.

I moved here 6 months ago from Oregon. One of the motivators for the move is the freedom concerning firearms in South Dakota. I am shocked at the lack of training facilities.

In Oregon, I lived in a town of 16,000 population, and we had four shooting ranges within a 20 minute drive of my house, three of which have 100 yard or greater rifle ranges. Here in Rapid City, population 75,000, there is one indoor 30 yard range. The nearest rifle range is a 1 hour drive away.

Shooting is a perishable skill. People who own firearms should practice with them! And practicing with firearms requires a safe place (NOT Barretta Road!!!). I will happily support with my time and money a safe place to practice with firearms.

Please facilitate the development of the Meade county shooting range.

Thank you!

Leland D. Breedlove  
503-998-8681  
lelandb@gmx.com

Physical address:  
2912 Chapel Lane #20,  
Rapid City, SD 57702

Mailing address:  
PO Box 1381  
Rapid City, SD 57709

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**David Heikes**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Hello GF&P folks: I write primarily to oppose the use of dogs for hunting on public lands (not related to bird hunting). A practice that can have negative effects on a range of species. I say not to the Custer expansion and a maybe to the gun range (but people need to be heard).

---

**Andrea Kipp**

**Norfolk NE**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Expanding Palisades State Park is a great idea! My family enjoys camping but we have a pop-up camper. It doesn't have a toilet or other facilities, so we rely on the facilities provided at the campsite. We would love to see showers included in the expansion plans!

---

**Ryan Nichols**

**Hot Springs SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

"limit the number of archery access permits for Unit WRD-27L to no more than 20 "any deer" access permits for residents" What is the rationale behind such a decision? Having archery hunted WRD-27L quite extensively for the last 8 years, I fail to see what this will accomplish. There is more pressure from upland bird hunters, road hunters and rifle hunters without the proper license than what I have encountered while archery hunting. I will agree that the adult male mule deer population is not what it was since 2018 and the number of mature animals has declined. However, I have observed over 100 whitetails in a single evening from one stand. I would definitely support a limited access for mule deer, but limiting whitetails, is absurd since their population has exploded.

## Public Waters

---

**Felix Recek**

**Elkhorn NE**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The game commission needs to lower the limits have you guys ever heard of active Target and panoptics that is going to take a lot of fish out of the lakes

---

**Bill Barnett**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

## Waterfowl Seasons

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**Bill Barnett**

**Hartford SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Eric Pulis**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose adding the merganser bag limit to the traditional duck bag limit. As the justification stated, there are few mergansers harvested in South Dakota. Merganser inclusion in the duck bag will not significantly reduce or increase harvest of mergansers or ducks. Additionally, the separate bag limits did not lead to hunter noncompliance with regulations (exceeding baglimits). I oppose the reduction waterfowl hunting opportunity. I do support the addition of mergansers to the bag limit to those who choose the three splash rule. As the reasoning for having the three bird option is for hunter who may not be entirely confident identifying waterfowl.

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**Chuck Dieter**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am opposed to allowing nonresidents to hunt Canada geese during the September season

# Public Comments

## Cancellation Policy

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**Jamey Tollefson**

**Lead SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I just finished looking at available sights in western South Dakota for the 4th of July weekend, and there are nearly no sites available.

I originally thought that no penalty would be a good idea to free up unused campsites, but now I am thinking that it will make reserving farther in advance even worse than it is now. Many sites are being reserved the Tuesday or Wednesday before the weekend. If there is no penalty, they could be reserved even farther in advance. When I make a reservation I make every effort to be there the first night of my reservation.

Perhaps a different way to change the current policy would be no penalty for a total cancellation, but a daily penalty for not showing up during a reservation. With the new log in system, it should be able to be tracked.

Under the current system people are "gaming" the system at the expense of others.

## Elk Season

---

**Mitchell Iverson**

**Spearfish SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I stongly oppose the proposed 46% increase in cow elk tags and the 26% increase in any elk tags. A 46% increase in cow elk tags is a drastic measure . A similar approach was used around 2006 and it took years for elk population to recover. Keep in mind that chronic wating disease has potential to reduce elk populations dramtically in the up coming years. In addition the opening of the forest canopy over the past 10 years has increased forage production. Elk reduce fine fuels in steeper uplands where cattle rarely graze. This proposal is described as a way to increase hunting opoortunities but it will drastically reduce them over the long run. I have worked as a range scientist/manager for 32 plus years and have consulted with biologists about this propstal and none of them agree with it from a ecological or economic stand point. I do not object to the concept of increasing tags to manage elk numbers but this is an extreme approach and appears to be a solution looking for a problem. I have worked for years with land owners on elk damage problems in MT and SD. Based on my experience, SD landowners do not understand commonly accepted approaches to limit elk damage to fences and crops. More effort could be spent for education which will reduce land owner complaints. No matter what GFP does you will always have complaints about lack of sufficient elk tags. Moreover, this proposal will increase hunter complaints about lack of elk tags in the future.

## License Forms and Fees

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**Jeff Gulbransen**

**Keystone SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Why is there an agent fee if purchasing a fishing permit from the game and fish directly. I can see it if I bought from a hardware store or anyone else selling permits. Why then aren't the permits just \$4.00 more, since they actually are.

## Other

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**Scott Bakker**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose the nest predator bounty program.



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**Sara Parker**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

As a lifelong resident of South Dakota, I am writing in opposition of the Nest Predator Bounty Program. It is wasteful, inhumane and not based on science. When South Dakota Game Fish and Parks accepted public input on this program in 2020, less than 7% of the 400+ written submissions were in favor of the program. Some reasons many South Dakotans are opposed to this bounty program:

1. It could unbalance our state's ecosystem. There was no scientific study done on the number of these "nest predator" species that currently inhabit South Dakota and no cap on each species to be killed. According to the SD Nest Predator Bounty Program Operational Dashboard, the following tails have been submitted since this bounty program began in April 2019: 107,400 Raccoon, 16,091 Striped Skunk, 10,934 Opossum, 1,142 Red Fox and 1,107 Badger. Since the program began each spring, the kill totals don't include the many young that starved to death when their mothers were trapped.
2. Trapping regulations are weak in South Dakota. Required trap check times are over 3 days west of the Missouri River and over 2 days east of the Missouri River (with extensions for weather and illness). SD doesn't require identification on traps, so there is no accountability for trappers who don't follow the rules.
3. Animals caught in traps for several days can be attacked by other animals, starve, dehydrate, or mangle their mouths and limbs trying to free themselves. Since this bounty program begins in the spring, many young starve to death when their mothers are trapped.
4. Snares and traps are indiscriminate - any animal can fall victim, including endangered species and companion animals. This is a big enough problem that GFP created videos teaching the public how to free dogs from traps and snares.
5. There is no scientific tracking of the results to the pheasant population, to measure the success or failure of the program. The 2019 summer brood count didn't show an increase in pheasant numbers and GFP discontinued their annual pheasant brood survey the following year.

The law recognizes the lives of these animals and the funds expended to kill them as collective resources. Please end the Nest Predator Bounty Program.

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**Carol Kendall**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The Nest Predator Program must be stopped for the sake of the eco system and welfare of the young animals relying on their mothers for life sustaining food and protection.

I do not understand how this practice, in any way, teaches youngsters to love and respect the outdoors. What it does teach them is that money is more important than life, killing is acceptable if the price is right, and the value of the natural world is fair game in the eyes of special interests.

I would appreciate it if someone within the oversight committee would explain what this program is supposed to Accomplish and data supporting that. My assumption is it is about pheasant population and the almighty money pheasant hunting brings into our state.

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**Diana Holden**

**Parkston SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Trapping is inhumane. Allowing inhumane treatment of animals is sending the message to our youth that it is okay and acceptable to be cruel whether it be to animals or human. We need to take responsibility for upsetting the natural order of things by taking natural way of life from them forcing them to adapt and then cruelly killing them when we don't like what we have forced them to do. Face it - people are the cause of cruelty and when you allow trapping which is just costing the state valuable resources, you are teaching our youth to not value life and that is poor moral character!

## Waterfowl Seasons

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**Robert Curtis**

**Redfield SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

If you do not let nonresidents hunt Canada geese in the September season in Region 3 then don't let them hunt in Region 4. To allow them to hunt in Region 4 and not in Region 3 is pretty hypocritical. So, if you are going to continue to let them hunt in Region 4 then you better let them hunt in Region 3.

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express my strong opposition towards the proposal to increase the number of elk tags for the Black Hills rifle and archery seasons. I will start by saying I have not been lucky enough to draw an elk tag in the Black Hills as of yet. However, I have been lucky enough to be a part of many hunts here in the Black Hills across a number of our units (primarily H2 and H3) in the 10 +/- years I have been active in the hunting world. From what I have witnessed over the years, I have no doubt in my mind that increasing the tags in the Black Hills will have a negative impact on the elk herds and quality of hunt we are lucky to possess here in South Dakota. These animals already face incredible amounts of pressure almost year-round from humans and predators alike. We have lion quotas that are rarely met, increased sightings of wolves, and the biggest threat (in my opinion) of all: social media. There are more people in the woods now year-round than ever before. The last thing these animals need is more people crawling through the woods for the sake of "opportunity". Social media has caused such an influx of ill-equipped hunters that watch a YouTube video and think they can just waltz out and shoot an elk. I read far too many posts last year about people finding dead elk that had been wounded during hunting season because of bad shots. I understand anyone is capable of a bad shot but I believe it will only get worse. Populations and herd makeup can be better managed using different methods other than tag increases. If GFP wants more mature bulls harvested then establish a branch antler requirement. Create winter "antlerless" and/or "spike only" seasons to help maintain healthy herd populations. We need to put the animals' well-being before the needs/wants of humans. The Black Hills tag is coveted and referred to as once in a lifetime for more reasons than just the number of years it can take to draw. Let's not lose all of that for the sake of satisfying human greed.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Gust - Hermosa, SD

Nancy Hilding  
President  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 788  
Black Hawk, SD 57718  
Feb 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022

SD Game, Fish and Parks Commission  
Joe Foss Building  
523 East Capitol  
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Commission,

**RE: Proposed rule on Missouri River (Pierre) Waterfowl Refuge**

**Letter of support for assigning a new status of Waterfowl or State Game Bird  
Refuge to the  
SD Important Bird Area - the Pierre Missouri River Bottomlands**

The National Audubon Society has designated a part of the proposed Missouri River (Pierre) Waterfowl Refuge as a South Dakota Important Bird Area (IBA).  
Here are hyperlinks to learn more about that designation.

<https://www.audubon.org/important-bird-areas/pierre-missouri-river-bottomlands>

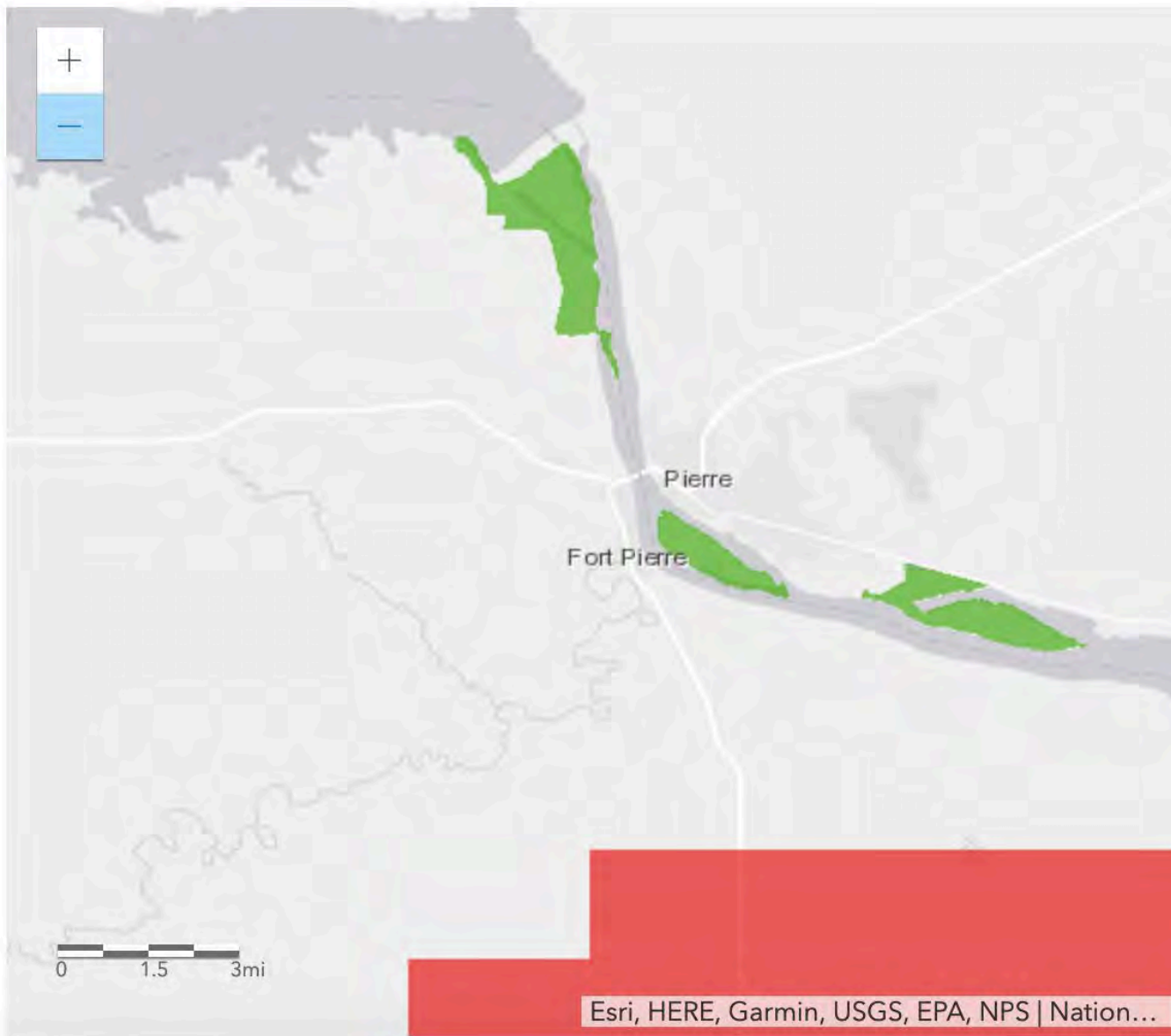
<https://netapp.audubon.org/iba/Reports/4973>

We support a waterfowl, state game bird and/or state game refuge status for the IBA. At this time, we are neutral on the designation of the rest of the area proposed as the Missouri River (Pierre) Waterfowl Refuge, as we don't know enough about it.

If this turns out to be controversial & compromise is desired, please consider an alternative where you designate of subset of the proposed area as a Refuge, but not the entire proposal.

# Pierre Missouri River Bottomland

South Dakota



Thanks,  
Nancy Hilding

President  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society