



SOUTH DAKOTA GAME, FISH AND PARKS COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

OCTOBER 5 - 6, 2023
CADILLAC JACK'S RESORT | DEADWOOD, SD

Call Meeting to Order (1 pm MT/ 2 pm CST)

Division of Administration

Action Items

1. Conflict of Interest Disclosure
2. Approval of Previous Minutes available at <https://gfp.sd.gov/commission/archives>
3. Additional Commissioner Salary Days
4. 2024 Commission Meeting Calendar Approval

Information Items

5. South Dakota Go Outdoors Update

Public Hearing

 (starting at 2 pm MT / 3 pm CST)

This portion of the meeting is designed for public to comment on finalizations.

Open Forum

 (immediately following the Public Hearing)

The portion of the meeting is designated for public comment on petitions, proposals, and other items of interest not on the agenda.

Petitions

6. Petition #203 – Nonresident Raccoon Hunting with Hounds

Finalizations

7. Free Park Entrance and Fishing
8. Hunt for Habitat

Division of Parks & Recreation

Action Items

9. CSP Airport

Information Items

10. Lake Alvin Dam Update
11. Lake Byron Land Exchange
12. Roundup Recap
13. 25th Anniversary of Mickelson Trails Trek
14. Fall Events in Parks
15. Camping, Visitation, and Revenue Report

Division of Wildlife

Action Items

16. Nonresident One-Day Fishing License

Information Items

17. CWD Update
18. Bighorn Sheep Action Plan
19. Elk Fall Classification Survey Results
20. AIS Program Update
21. Lake Chub Status
22. GPA Habitat and Public Use Assessment
23. Western South Dakota Shooting Complex Update
24. Fall Fishing and Hunting Forecast & License Sales Update

Solicitation of Agenda Items

Now is the time to submit agenda items for the Commission to consider at a following Commission Meeting.

Adjourn

Next meeting will be held on November 2-3, 2023, in Madison, SD.

Call Meeting to Order

Chair Rissler called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm CST at the Watertown Convention Center in Watertown, SD, on September 7, 2023. Commissioners Stephanie Rissler, Julie Bartling, Jim White, Robert Whitmyre, Travis Bies, Jon Locken, Bruce Cull, and Charles Spring were present. With all eight members present, a quorum was established. The public and staff can listen via SDPB Livestream and participate via conference or in person, with approximately 64 total participants attending via Zoom or in person.

1. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Chair Rissler requested the disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest, but none were brought forward.

2. Approve minutes of the previous meeting minutes

Chair Rissler called for any additions or corrections to the regular minutes of July 2023 meeting. Minutes are available at <https://gfp.sd.gov/commission/archives/>.

Motion by Bies, seconded by Bartling to APPROVE THE JULY 2023 REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Additional Salary Days

Chair Rissler called for any additional salary days from the commissioners. Whitmyre and Springs reported one salary day and Bies and Cull reported two salary days.

Motion by Bartling, seconded by Bies to APPROVE THE ADDITIONAL SALARY DAYS. The motion carried unanimously.

4. New Staff Introduction

Jeff VanMeeteren, Parks & Recreation Director, and Tom Kirschenmann, Wildlife Director, introduced new staff to the Commissioners.

5. Park Entrance and Fishing Proposal

Jeff VanMeeteren, Parks and Recreation Division Director brought forth a proposal in which the department recommends removal of two dates (Mother's and Father's Day) from the park entrance license exemptions as well as the free fishing weekends.

Motioned by White, seconded by Whitmyre to APPROVE THE PARK ENTRANCE LICENSE EXEMPTIONS PROPOSAL IN WHICH REMOVES TWO DATES FROM THE PARK ENTRANCE LICENSE AND FISHING LICENSE EXEMPTIONS. The motion carried unanimously.

The department intends to present this change for finalization at the October 2023 Commission meeting, and the public can continue to provide comments about the proposal until then.

6. Nonresident One-Day Fishing License

Tom Kirschenmann, Wildlife Division Director, brought forth an administrative action in which the department recommends removal of the one-day nonresident fishing license option beginning with the 2024 license year (December 15, 2023).

Motioned by Bartling, seconded by Cull to APPROVE THE PROPOSAL TO REMOVE THE NONRESIDENT ONE-DAY FISHING LICENSE OPTION. The motion carried unanimously.

The department intends to present the Administrative Action for final adoption at the October 2023 Commission meeting, and the public can continue to provide comments about the action until then.

Public Hearing

Jon Kotilnek, Senior Staff Attorney, opened the public hearing at 2:00 pm CST on September 7, 2023, for discussion from those in attendance on finalizations that the commission would be hearing for the day.

- 2:03 pm: Ken Edel of Rapid City, SD testified virtually in opposition to the trout spearing.

- No other testimony was provided during the Public Hearing.

Mr. Kotilnek closed the public hearing at 2:07 pm.

Open Forum

Jon Kotilnek, Senior Staff Attorney, opened the floor at 2:08 pm CST for discussion from those in attendance in matters of importance to them that may not be on the agenda.

- 2:09 pm: Tim Goodwin of Piedmont, SD testified in person in opposition to the mountain lion proposal.
- 2:13 pm: David Goodwin of Piedmont, SD testified in person in opposition to the mountain lion proposal.
- 2:17 pm: Finn Sacrison of Rapid City, SD testified in person in favor of the mountain lion proposal.
- 2:22 pm: Nancy Hilding of Black Hawk, SD representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society testified virtually in opposition to the mountain lion proposal and in favor of the mountain lion petitions.
- 2:28 pm: Dana Rogers of Hills City, SD representing the South Dakota Bowhunters Incorporated testified virtually in opposition of the mountain lion proposals.
- 2:30 pm: Trevor Davis of Sioux Falls, SD testified virtually in support of the mountain lion proposals.
- 2:34 pm: Zach Hunke of Watertown, SD, representing the South Dakota Wildlife Federation testified in person about the Waterfowl Access Plan.
- 2:38 pm: Jeremy Wells of Sturgis, SD representing the South Dakota Houndsmen Association testified in support of the mountain lion proposal, and the dog collar petition.
- 2:41 pm: Julie Anderson of Rapid City, SD testified virtually in opposition to the mountain lion proposal.
- 2:43 pm: Patrick Weiner of Spearfish, SD representing the Houndsmen of SD testified in support of the Proposal.
- 2:47 pm: Tate Wells of Piedmont, SD testified in support of the mountain lion proposal.

Mr. Kotilnek closed the open forum at 2:50 pm CST.

7. Hunt for Habitat Proposal

Tom Kirschenmann, Wildlife Director, brought forth a proposal in which the department recommends modifying administrative rule to adjust licenses that are issued in the Hunt for Habitat drawing. These adjustments include the creation of two “any deer” single-tag licenses and the removal of one “any antelope” license from the three-license package that is currently available, resulting in a two-license package including one “any deer” and one “any elk” tag. As a result, only nine tags will be issued to six individuals, including one “any bison”, two “any deer”, and three “any deer” plus “any elk” packages. Previously, ten tags were issued to four individuals, including one “any bison” and three license packages with three tags each.

Motioned by Whitmyre, seconded by Cull to APPROVE THE CHANGES TO THE HUNTING FOR HABITAT LICENSES. Motion carried unanimously.

The department intends to present this change for finalization at the October 2023 Commission meeting, and the public can continue to provide comments about the proposal until then.

8. Mountain Lion Hunting Season Proposal

Andrew Norton, Wildlife Program Administrator, made a presentation to the Commission that showed the mountain lion population is expected to decrease below the Black Hills population objective based on proposed changes to allow the use of dogs to hunt mountain lions in the Black Hills Fire Protection District. The population objective was established in the 2019 Mountain Lion Management Plan.

Tom Kirschenmann, Wildlife Director, brought forth the proposal in which would allow the use of dogs to harvest six female mountain lions and six male mountain lions (i.e., a total of 12 mountain lions) in the Black Hills Fire Protection District, in addition to the 15 access permits that allow the use of dogs in Custer State Park.

Motioned by Bies, seconded by Spring to DENY THE PROPOSAL TO THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE MOUNTAIN LION HUNTING SEASON. Motion to deny carried unanimously.

GFP will immediately begin the process to revise the management plan and evaluate the objective and hunting season strategies. Plan revisions and recommended changes to mountain lion management will be completed by July of 2024, so potential changes could be implemented for the 2024-2025 hunting season.

9. Petition #197: Mountain Lion Season: Lactation Female Protection

Nancy Hilding, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society, submitted petition #197 requesting a person using dogs to hunt mountain lions may not harvest a female showing obvious signs of lactation.

Motioned by Cull, seconded by Bartling to DENY PETITION #197. Motion carried unanimously.

Motioned by Bies, seconded by Spring to ADOPT RESOLUTION 23-23 DENYING PETITION #197. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Petition #198: Mountain Lion Season: Dog Collar Requirements

Nancy Hilding, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society, submitted petition #198 requesting the requirement that hunters using hounds must have GPS/Stimulation collars (e-collars) in place while hunting.

Motioned by Bies, seconded by Spring to DENY PETITION #198. Motion carried unanimously.

Motioned by Bartling, seconded by White to ADOPT RESOLUTION 23-24 DENYING PETITION #198. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Petition #199: Mountain Lion Season: Guides

Nancy Hilding, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society, submitted petition #199 which would require an owner of trained hounds used to chase and hunt mountain lions to register with the department as a guide, if they offer to use that persons hounds to help others hunt mountain lions and charges for the services. For land that he will traverse while chasing lions, the hound owner guide shall meet all the requirements for guiding that are required by any public land management agency and/or get permission from private landowners. As well as require a person who has used a hound hunter guide to hunt mountain lions and kills a lion using this service, shall disclose the use of a hound hunter guide to SD GFP when they turn in the lion carcass.

Motioned by Whitmyre, seconded by Bies to DENY PETITION #199. Motion carried unanimously.

Motioned by Whitmyre, seconded by Spring to ADOPT RESOLUTION 23-25 DENYING PETITION #199. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Petition #200: Mountain Lion Season: Lion Injuries

Nancy Hilding, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society, submitted petition #200 which requires hunters using hounds to report to GFP any injuries to hounds from fights with lions & approximately where & when such injury is believed to have occurred. It would require hunters using hounds to report any injury to mountain lion from hounds, if mountain lion escaped & approximately where & when such injury is believed to have occurred. And would amend existing rule to no person may release dogs on tracks indicating multiple mountain lions traveling together and must cease any chase of a family group of lions (mother with kittens) and report any evidence of family group of lions having been chased & location of chase.

Motioned by Whitmyre, seconded by Bartling to DENY PETITION #200. Motion carried unanimously.

Motioned by Bartling seconded by Spring to ADOPT RESOLUTION 23-26 DENYING PETITION #200. Motion carried unanimously.

13. Petition #201: Mountain Lion Season: Lions on Prairies

Nancy Hilding, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society, submitted petition #201 requiring that no person may release dogs on mountain lion tracks where there are no trees or rock outcroppings for lions to get out-of-the-reach of hounds. If hounds have chased the lion to such an area, the hound hunter shall use the GPS/stimulation collar to call the hounds back to the hunter.

Motioned by Bartling, seconded by Spring to DENY PETITION #201. Motioned carried unanimously.

Motioned by Bies, seconded by Bartling to ADOPT RESOLUTION 23-27 DENYING PETITION #201. Motion carried unanimously.

14. Petition #202: Mountain Lion Season: License Fee Rule Changes

Nancy Hilding, representing the Prairie Hills Audubon Society, submitted petition #202 which would require fees to be changed to the following: Mountain lion license, (a) hunting without the use of hounds, \$34. If a male mountain lion is killed, or a female mountain lion is killed, a \$10 fee for male and \$20 fee for female will be accessed as an extra fee, when the animals are turned in for inspection; (b) hunting with the use of hounds outside Custer State Park, \$80. If a female mountain lion is killed, an extra \$20 will be accessed as an extra fee, when the animal is turned in for inspection; and (c) hunting with the use of hounds within Custer State Park; \$100. If a female mountain lion is killed, an extra \$20 will be accessed as an extra fee, when the animal is turned in for inspection.

Motioned by Whitmyre, seconded by White to DENY PETITION #202. Motion carried unanimously.

Motioned by Whitmyre, seconded by Spring to ADOPT RESOLUTION 23-28 DENYING PETITION #202. Motion carried unanimously.

15. Fisheries Finalizations

Jake Davis, Fisheries Program Manager, presented the Commission with the following finalizations for their consideration.

15a. General Provisions

Proposed changes to current rule: (1) Modify language to better clarify that a resident is not in violation of any season, daily, or possession limit established for the species of fish in a man-made water body on land owned by the resident provided the resident owns the bed of the water body in its entirety. (2) Allow invasive carps and rough fish to be taken with dip nets.

41:07:01:20. Authorization for landowner to perform fisheries management activities - Conditions. The Secretary may grant authorization without fee to a landowner, or the landowner's designee, to conduct fisheries management activities on created, manmade impoundments that only inundate private land under the following conditions: (1) Activities permitted under this authorization include the use of special equipment, stocking permitted species of fish, chemical control of vegetation, and fish removal beyond the allowance of the applicable fish limit; (2) The authorized landowner, or the landowner's designee, shall notify a Conservation Officer prior to transporting live fish or fish in quantities exceeding applicable fish limits away from the private land where the waters are located; (3) Persons Except as provided in SDCL 41-6-2, persons fishing in waters included in this authorization shall abide by applicable fish limits in accordance with § 41:07:03; and (4) That access to a requested water is entirely under the applicant's control by ownership, lease, or easement. If a requested water is not entirely owned by the applicant, then the applicant shall provide with the application a true and correct copy of the written lease or easement.

41:07:01:17. Liberalized take of silver carp, bighead carp, rough fish, smelt, and lake herring. Smelt and lake herring may be taken by hook and line, seines, lift nets, cast nets, and dip nets. Silver carp and bighead carp that inadvertently jump into any boat or are netted from the air using a dip net may be retained. Silver carp, bighead carp, and rough fish may be taken with dip nets. No person may transport live smelt, ~~live silver carp, or live bighead carp~~ or live fish defined as aquatic invasive species in 41:10:04:01, away from the water in which they were taken.

Motioned by Cull, seconded by Bartling to APPROVE THE FISHERIES FINALIZATION ON GENERAL PROVISION. Motion carried unanimously.

15b. General Provisions and Hoop Nets, Traps, Setlines and Floatlines

Proposed changes to current rule: (1) Include the cost of hoop net, trap and setline licenses with other fishing license fees. (2) Clarify that up to ten floatlines may be fished under a setline license.

41:07:01:12. Fishing license fees. Fishing license fees are as follows: (1) Resident fishing license, \$28; (2) Resident senior fishing license, age 65 or over, \$12; (3) Nonresident fishing license, \$67; (4) One-day fishing license, valid from 12:01 a.m. to 12:00 midnight, inclusive: (a) Resident, \$8; (b) Nonresident, \$16; (5) Nonresident three-consecutive-days fishing license, \$37; and, (6) Special paddlefish permit, \$25., (7) Resident hoop and trap net, \$10; and (8) Resident setline, \$5.

41:07:08:01. License requirements and fees. Hoop net, trap, setline, and floatline licenses may be sold only to residents of this state. The fee for each hoop net or trap license is ten dollars. The fee for each setline or floatline license is five dollars.

41:07:08:02. Maximum number of hooks allowed on setlines and floatlines – Mechanical devices prohibited. No more than 20 twenty hooks may be attached to any setline. No more than one hook maybe attached to any floatline. A person may not use a setline or floatline that operates by a reel or any mechanical device. One setline, or up to ten floatlines, may be used to fish at one time with a setline and floatline license.

Motioned by Whitmyre, seconded by Locken to APPROVE THE FISHERIES FINALIZATION TO THE GENERAL PROVISIONS AND HOOP NETS, TRAPS, SETLINES AND FLOATLINES. Motion carried unanimously.

15c. Fish Limits

Proposed changes to rule: 1. Establish a catch and release season for lake sturgeon on Big Stone Lake.

41:07:03:02. South Dakota-Minnesota boundary waters. In the South Dakota-Minnesota boundary waters no person may harvest in one day or have in possession at any time more than the following: (1) Six largemouth bass or smallmouth bass or combination thereof; (2) Six northern pike; (3) Four walleye of any species combined; however, no more than one may be 20 inches or greater in length; (4) Five catfish of any species combined; however, no more than one may be over 24 inches in length; (5) Ten crappie of any species combined; (6) Fifteen yellow perch, possession limit 30; (7) One hundred bullheads; (8) Twenty rock bass; (9) Ten bluegill or sunfish, or combination thereof; (10) An unlimited number of rough fish and white bass; and (11) The season for all species of sturgeon is closed, except on Big Stone Lake, a lake sturgeon season will be open for catch-and-release angling only from June sixteenth through April fourteenth.

Motioned by Bartling, seconded by Bies to APPROVE THE FISHERIES FINALIZATION TO THE FISH LIMITS. Motion carried unanimously.

15d. Paddlefish Season

Proposed changes to rule: Increase the number of resident paddlefish tags during the Lake Francis Case snagging/archery season from 350 to 500 tags.

41:07:05:02. Paddlefish season in special management areas. Any paddlefish angler ~~18~~ eighteen years of age and older shall obtain and have in possession a valid South Dakota fishing license and a valid, nontransferable paddlefish permit and associated unlocked tag to take or attempt to take a paddlefish with a bow and arrow or a crossbow or take or attempt to take paddlefish or rough fish by snagging. A Nebraska resident possessing a South Dakota nonresident paddlefish permit is exempt from the South Dakota fishing license requirement if the Nebraska resident angler possesses a valid Nebraska fishing license or is legally exempt from compliance with Nebraska license or permit requirements. Any paddlefish angler under ~~18~~ eighteen years of age shall have a valid paddlefish permit and associated unlocked tag in possession while shooting paddlefish with bow and arrow or a crossbow or snagging paddlefish or rough fish.

Each paddlefish caught and kept must have the tag immediately affixed to the fish and locked in the manner and place indicated in the instructions provided with the tag. Each paddlefish caught and not kept must be immediately returned, unharmed, to the water from which it was taken. All paddlefish anglers shall cast for and hook their own fish. No person may attempt to snag any fish after all paddlefish tags issued to the person have been locked.

(1) The snagging season for paddlefish and rough fish is open on the South Dakota-Nebraska boundary waters below Gavin's Point Dam and on the Big Sioux River from the I-29 bridge to the confluence of the Big Sioux River and the Missouri River from October ~~1~~ first through October ~~31~~ thirty-first.

The snagging hours on the South Dakota-Nebraska Boundary waters and areas of the Big Sioux River open to paddlefish snagging are from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. central time daily. Only a legal angler with a valid paddlefish permit and associated unlocked tag may snag paddlefish and rough fish during this season.

For the South Dakota-Nebraska boundary waters the annual quota of ~~3,200~~ three thousand two hundred fish is allocated by a permit and tag issued by each state according to the following schedule: Nebraska ~~1,600~~ one thousand six hundred permits; South Dakota ~~1,550~~ one thousand five hundred and fifty resident and ~~50~~ nonresident permits. Permits and associated tags are available by lottery drawing after application. Any resident or nonresident permit remaining after the first lottery drawing is available on a first-come, first-served basis to any person not already holding

a paddlefish permit, who applies. After September ~~1~~ first, a person may apply for a second permit. A person may obtain a maximum of two permits a year.

Paddlefish may be taken from sunrise to sunset from June ~~1~~ first through June ~~30~~ thirtieth from the Missouri River below Gavin's Point Dam with a bow and arrow. In addition to a bow and arrow, a crossbow may be used to take paddlefish downstream from the Highway 81 bridge.

Except as provided in this rule, an archery paddlefish angler ~~18~~ eighteen years of age and older shall obtain and have possession of a valid South Dakota fishing license and a valid, nontransferable paddlefish permit and associated tag available from the licensing section of the department before participating in archery fishing for paddlefish. A Nebraska resident possessing a South Dakota nonresident archery paddlefish permit is exempt from the South Dakota fishing license requirement if the Nebraska resident angler possesses a valid Nebraska fishing license or is legally exempt from compliance with Nebraska license or permit requirements. Any paddlefish angler under ~~18~~ eighteen years of age shall have a valid paddlefish permit and associated tag in possession while archery fishing paddlefish.

Two hundred fifty-five archery permits and associated tags are available to residents by lottery drawing after application. Individual paddlefish archery anglers may apply for a second permit and associated tag if any are available following the initial lottery drawing. Anglers may obtain a maximum of two archery paddlefish permits and associated tags each year. An additional eight percent of the permits available to residents may be issued to nonresidents by lottery drawing after application.

Paddlefish and rough fish season is open on the waters of Lake Francis Case and the White River up to the Highway 47 bridge from May ~~1~~ first through May ~~31~~ thirty-first. Paddlefish may be taken by snagging, bow and arrow, or a crossbow.

The snagging and archery hours on the waters of Lake Francis Case and the White River up to the Highway 47 bridge are from 6:00 a.m. through 9:00 p.m., central time daily. Only a legal angler with a valid paddlefish permit and associated unlocked tag may shoot paddlefish with a bow and arrow or snag paddlefish and rough fish during this season.

For the waters of Lake Francis Case and the White River up to the Highway 47 bridge, the annual quota of ~~350~~ 500 fish is allocated by a permit and tag. Permits and associated tags are available by lottery drawing after application. Any resident permit remaining after the first lottery drawing is available first-come, first-served to any applicant not already holding a paddlefish permit. After April 1, a person may apply for a second permit. A person may obtain a maximum of two permits a year.

Motioned by Bartling, seconded by Bies to APPROVE THE FISHERIES FINALIZATION TO THE PADDLEFISH SEASON. Motion carried unanimously.

15e. Spearing

Proposed changes to current rule: Allow for rainbow trout to be harvested by legal spearing and archery methods from reservoirs within the boundaries of the Black Hills Fish Management Area.

41:07:06:03. Areas open to spearing of game fish. Except as otherwise provided in this section, game fish, except paddlefish, muskie, and sturgeon, may only be taken with a spear gun, spear, crossbow, or bow and arrow, from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset, in the following areas during the dates listed: (1) South Dakota-Nebraska boundary waters from the South Dakota-Nebraska state line downstream, July ~~1~~ first through December ~~31~~ thirty-first; (2) All inland waters, May ~~1~~ first through March ~~31~~ thirty-first, with the following exceptions: (A) The taking of salmonids within the boundaries of the Black Hills Fisheries Management Area is prohibited, however rainbow trout may be taken within reservoirs; (B) The taking of walleye from lakes with a daily limit of one walleye is prohibited; and (C) Northern pike and catfish may be taken for noncommercial purposes, year-round, from all inland waters, except from Lynn, Middle Lynn and Amsden Lakes in Day County, Lake Sinai and Twin Lake (east of U.S Highway 81) in Brookings County, Twin Lake (west of U.S. Highway 81) in Kingsbury County, and North Island and South Island Lakes in McCook and Minnehaha Counties; and (3) Northern pike and catfish may be taken from all South Dakota-Minnesota boundary waters, except the Bois de Sioux River, November ~~15~~ fifteenth through the last Sunday of February.

Upon written request, the commission may, by resolution, temporarily open other areas to the public.

Motioned by White, seconded by Bartling to DENY THE FISHERIES FINALIZATION TO SPEARING. Motion carried unanimously.

15f. Bait

Proposed changes to current rule: (1) Clarify that traps, seines, dip nets, lift nets, and cast nets may only be used to take bait species listed in the rule describing species that may be taken as bait for noncommercial use. (2) Remove the term “minnow” from the description of traps allowed for use to take bait species, as other types of traps are used to take non-fish bait species described in the bait chapter.

41:09:04:02.04. Species that may be taken as bait for noncommercial use. Species that may be taken as bait by lawful anglers for noncommercial use, by methods described in 41:09:04:04, are: flathead chub, western silvery minnow, plains minnow, fathead minnow, white sucker, creek chub, golden shiner, emerald shiner, spottail shiner, gizzard shad, tiger salamander (all subspecies), leopard frog (all subspecies), crayfish (*Cambarus diogenes*, *Orconectes immunis*, *Orconectes virilis*, and *Orconectes causeyi*), freshwater shrimp, and leeches. Live gizzard shad may not be transported away from the water in which they were taken.

Motioned by Bartling, seconded by White to APPROVE THE FISHERIES FINALIZATION TO BAIT. Motion carried unanimously.

16. Turkey and Antelope Draw Finalization

Changes from last year: Modify administrative rule to restrict the number of applications a person may submit during the third draw for Prairie Spring Turkey, Fall Turkey and Prairie Antelope to one application for each season.

41:06:01:09. Application for unsold big game licenses -- Future eligibility. In antelope and turkey season units where resident and nonresident licenses are limited in number and licenses remain unsold following a second lottery drawing, a person ~~who does not have a license in a season~~ may apply for up to five one leftover licenses license in that season. ~~and a person who already has a license in a season may apply for up to four additional licenses in that season.~~ After the third drawing, a person may apply for an unlimited number of leftover licenses on a first-come first-serve basis. Nonresidents are not eligible for East River spring turkey or East River fall turkey licenses except for licenses unsold after the second lottery drawing. Purchase of an antelope or turkey license under this section does not affect the eligibility of the applicant in future lotteries.

A person who possesses two licenses for any of the Black Hills, East River, West River, Refuge, Custer State Park or Muzzleloader Deer Hunting Seasons may not apply for a license in the second combined lottery drawing for these seasons and a person who possesses one license may apply for one additional license for a season if the person does not possess a license for that season. A resident may submit one application for each season in the third lottery drawing if the resident does not possess a license for that season and in the fourth lottery drawing, a resident may submit no more than five applications. In the third and fourth leftover drawings, a nonresident who does not possess a license may submit two applications and a nonresident who possesses one license may submit one application for a season if the nonresident does not possess a license for that season. After the fourth lottery drawing, a person may obtain an unlimited number of licenses from a pool of remaining resident and nonresident licenses.

If licenses remain unsold after the initial lottery drawing for Black Hills Elk Hunting Season, Prairie Elk Hunting Season, and Archery Elk Hunting Season, a person who does not already have an elk license may apply for a license in a second or subsequent lottery drawing if the person submits the nonrefundable application fee and the applicable license fee with the application. Purchase and receipt of a first-choice elk license during the first lottery drawing counts as a successful application and affects eligibility in future first lottery drawings for the same season. Purchase and receipt of an elk license in the second drawing by the use of preference points is a successful application and affects eligibility in future lottery drawings for these seasons. Purchase and receipt of an elk license in the second lottery drawing without the use of preference points, or purchase and receipt of an elk license in subsequent drawings, does not affect eligibility or preference in future lottery drawings for these seasons.

Motioned by Bartling, seconded by Bies to APPROVE THE TURKEY AND ANTELOPE DRAW FINALIZATION. Motion carried unanimously.

[NOTE: Commissioner Cull was not in meeting attendance on September 8, 2023, due to scheduling conflicts.]

17. Fall Foliage Tracker

Heather Berg, Parks GIS & Asset Management Program Specialist, stated this is the third year the public can track state park fall foliage color changes using an interactive map. Color conditions and photos of the current autumn scenery are updated weekly by field staff. Marketing efforts will promote the foliage tracker and encourage fall visits and stays within the parks for hunters and park-goers.

18. Aquatics Access Map Update

Heather Berg, Parks GIS & Asset Management Program Specialist, announced that the Public Fishing Access map has been rebranded to focus on a variety of Public Water Access uses. Map content has been divided to highlight five main Aquatic Access Experiences: boaters and small watercraft users, shore anglers, ice anglers, waterfowl hunters, and Black Hills anglers. Interactions with the map provide information on current conditions and photos.

19. The Trails are Calling Update

Rachel Comes, Statewide Volunteer Coordinator, provided an update on the Trails Are Calling annual park theme activity aimed at encouraging visitors to hike designated trails in 46 participating state parks, where they can search for Sasquatch signs, submit photos, and earn prizes. An interactive map was created to identify the specific trails where Sasquatch sightings had been reported, helping participants plan their adventures. To date, there have been 2,471 submissions and 5,514 hikers on South Dakota State Park trails. Various trail programs were held across the state, and Sasquatch also helped promote park entrance license sales, as well as the Go Forth and Check Out South Dakota State Parks programs. The presentation concluded with a Sasquatch sighting.

20. New Hunting Opportunities in Parks

Al Nedved, Parks and Recreation Director provided the Commission with an update on the change to ARSD 41:03:01:16 that was finalized in March. This change allows park managers to designate areas within state parks and recreation areas for hunting opportunities in the months of September and October.

Staff has identified 3,221 acres in 15 parks that will provide new hunting opportunities starting on September 1, 2023, and continuing into the spring of 2024. Maps for these designated areas are available for download on park web pages and can also be obtained within the park.

Furthermore, staff will conduct an evaluation of the expansion, seeking public feedback and assessing opportunities for mapping improvements. They will also explore potential areas for further expansion in the coming year.

21. Fort Sisseton Master Plan

Jon Jacobson, Senior Principal of Confluence, and William Collignon, Regional Park Supervisor with Game, Fish, and Parks, presented information on the composition and purpose of the Governor's Commission on Fort Sisseton. They discussed the questions and issues that led them to pursue a master planning effort and outlined their goals for Fort Sisseton State Park's master plan.

Mr. Jacobson led a discussion through a slideshow presentation summarizing the master plan in several key areas: public input, current uses and event planning, interpretation, a special analysis of the property, an engineer-led building assessment, and financial feasibility.

The process identified several notable changes and additions, including relocating the park entrance from the north side to the south side of the berm, the need to expand technological capabilities, the creation of an interpretive museum area, and the relocation of administration facilities out of interpretive areas. These changes would be consolidated into a new visitor center, which would require fundraising efforts involving the Fort Sisseton Commission and Parks & Wildlife Foundation.

Additionally, there is considerable interest in expanding camping services based on public input and the necessity for additional operational revenue to support this growth.

22. Custer State Park Airport Decommissioning Update

Jeff VanMeeteren, Parks and Recreation Director provided an update on the status of the CSP airport. Four concerns were expressed: (1) The airport receives very limited use, with approximately 50-75 recreational pilots using it annually. (2) GF&P staff, Wildland Fires, and no other state airplanes utilize this airport. (3) Immediate repairs of approximately \$250K and eventual runway replacement, estimated at \$2-3 million, must be 100% funded by park entrance and camping revenue, as there are no Federal funds available for this airport. (4) There are two nearby airport options for pilots: Custer Co. Airport, which is 16 miles away, and Hot Spring Airport, which is 36 miles away.

Considering these concerns and GF&P's user pay philosophy, the department is strongly considering recommending the decommissioning of the CSP Airport or not renewing its license. Public comments will continue to be accepted through September 29th.

23. Camping, Visitation, and Revenue Report

Jeff VanMeeteren, Parks and Recreation Director reported that August was a successful month for camping, with the Division experiencing a 1% increase in camping units compared to last year. Additionally, the Parks Division saw a 10% increase in park entrance license sales, with the largest increases seen in combination, daily, and CSP license sales. Overall, park visitation numbers remained consistent with last year, with over 1 million visitors enjoying our state parks and recreation areas.

24. Elk Contingency Licenses

John Kanta, Terrestrial Section Chief, discussed with the Commission the Elk Contingency License Recommendation. South Dakota Administrative Rule (ARSD § 41:06:26:06) affords the GFP commission authority, by resolution, to allocate additional antlerless elk contingency licenses to provide short-term relief to producers during temporary drought conditions. The number of contingency licenses cannot exceed 20% of available Black Hills antlerless elk licenses. Further guidance is provided in strategy 1-C of the GFP 2021 Elk Action Plan which details using elk population objectives and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) forage production model to develop recommendations (see table above).

NRCS Forage Production (% of normal per elk unit)	Contingency Licenses (% of current year unit antlerless allocation)		
	Decrease Obj	Maintain Obj	Increase Obj
90-100%	none	none	none
80-89%	10%	5%	none
70-79%	15%	10%	5%
<70%	20%	15%	10%

Range conditions and model results are discussed with NRCS and US Forest Service (USFS) staff. Well above average growing conditions in 2023 resulted in a recommendation of zero contingency licenses in any antlerless elk hunting unit. The USFS agreed with forage predictions based on the NRCS model. Currently, the USFS has no intentions of requiring any producers to remove cattle from grazing allotments early because of inadequate range conditions due to poor forage production. The table below provides forage production by antlerless elk unit through August 15, 2023, in addition to unit population objectives and antlerless elk license allocation.

Elk Unit	Forage Production	Unit Objective	2023		
			Antlerless Licenses	Contingency Percent	Contingency Licenses
1B	117%	increase	65	0%	0
2BCD	103%	maintain	100	0%	0
2EFG	100%	maintain	120	0%	0
2HIJ	99%	maintain	30	0%	0
3BCD	99%	maintain	135	0%	0
3EFG	106%	maintain	180	0%	0
4B	104%	maintain	40	0%	0
5B	99%	increase	0	0%	0
7B	103%	maintain	20	0%	0
9B	104%	decrease	40	0%	0
All			730		0

Ultimately, the department recommended no changes to the Elk Contingency plan for this year.

Motioned by Whitmyre, seconded by Bies to APPROVE THE ELK CONTINGENCY LICENSE PLAN.

25. Waterfowl Hunting Access Plan Adoption

Ryan Wendinger, Habitat Program Administrator, presented the board with the Waterfowl Hunting Access Plan.

Motioned by Bartling, seconded by Locken to APPROVE THE WATERFOWL HUNTING ACCESS PLAN. Motion carried unanimously.

26. Deer Management Plan

John Kanta, Terrestrial Section Chief, discussed that GFP staff is currently in the process of reviewing and revising the deer management plan. This revision involves a thorough public input process, including a public opinion survey to be distributed to landowners and hunters. Additionally, GFP has established a stakeholder group representing individuals and organizations from across South Dakota. The inaugural meeting took place in late August.

A draft of the deer management plan is expected to be ready in early 2024. Subsequently, this plan will be presented to the GFP Commission for further discussion, public comment, and ultimately, adoption by the commission.

27. Goose Depredation Update

Nick Rossman, Regional Wildlife Manager, provided a brief overview of the Electronic Canada Goose Depredation Hub, the Request for Service (RFS) process, and the internal dashboard monitoring page. He also gave a general overview of the different levels of crop damage caused by Canada Geese, along with the volume of work and materials involved in handling an RFS. Lastly, he discussed the hiring of post-secondary students as interns and highlighted their importance in meeting the demands of requests related to depredating Canada Geese in South Dakota.

28. Western South Dakota Shooting Sports Complex Update

John Kanta, Terrestrial Section Chief, updated the commission on the construction of a world-class shooting sports complex located in Meade County. Designed with safety as a top priority, this range complex will provide the public, families, and youth groups with a world-class opportunity to engage in multiple shooting sports. The facility will accommodate beginners and experts alike, offering space for education, outreach, and organized shooting competitions.

The mass grading and dirt work for the SD Shooting Sports Complex were put out for bid on August 3rd, and bids were accepted until August 30th. On August 31st, a bid opening was conducted, resulting in the receipt of four bids for this project. The lowest bid came in at \$5,878,008.00. Groundbreaking is anticipated to take place in early 2024.

29. Fall Hunting Forecast and License Sales Update

Tom Kirschenmann, Wildlife Director, presented a concise summary of license sales compared to the previous month. While many license categories showed minimal changes, there was a notable increase in fishing licenses, making it a strong month for fishing enthusiasts. Kirschenmann also discussed the expectation of seeing a higher number of hunting license sales as the grouse and pheasant seasons approach.

Additionally, Director Kirschenmann provided a brief overview of what hunters can anticipate for the upcoming fall hunting season, including both upland and big game season.

Adjourn

MOTION TO ADJOURN was made by Bartling, seconded by Locken. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 am on September 8, 2023.

Respectfully submitted.



Kevin Robling, Department Secretary



SOUTH DAKOTA GAME, FISH AND PARKS COMMISSION MEETINGS 2024

JAN **PIERRE**
11 - 12 MATTHEWS TRAINING CENTER

JUL **SHIOUX FALLS**
11 - 12 GOOD EARTH STATE PARK

FEB **NO MEETING**

AUG **NO MEETING**

MAR **PIERRE**
7 - 8 TBA

SEPT **PIERRE**
5 - 6 MATTHEWS TRAINING CENTER

APR **PIERRE**
4 - 5 MATTHEWS TRAINING CENTER

OCT **RAPID CITY**
3 - 4 OUTDOOR CAMPUS WEST

MAY **CUSTER STATE PARK**
2 - 3 EVENT BARN

NOV **PIERRE**
7 - 8 CAPITOL BUILDING - ROOM 414

JUN **PIERRE**
6 - 7 MATTHEWS TRAINING CENTER

DEC **PIERRE**
5 - 6 CAPITOL BUILDING - ROOM 414

**For more details or previous meeting archives,
visit <https://gfp.sd.gov/commission/>**

All dates and locations subject to change with 30 days prior notice.

Petition for Rule Change Form

info@gfp.sd.us <info@gfp.sd.us>

Thu 9/28/2023 10:35 PM

To:Patrickweimer12@gmail.com <Patrickweimer12@gmail.com>

Cc:Kierl, Liz <Liz.Kierl@state.sd.us>;Harrington, Nick <Nick.Harrington@state.sd.us>

South Dakota - Game, Fish, and Parks

Petition for Rule Change

A new form was just submitted from the <http://gfp.sd.gov/> website with the following information:

ID: 203

Petitioner Name: Patrick Weimer

Address: 828 east grant street
Spearfish , SD 57783

Email: Patrickweimer12@gmail.com

Phone: 605-641-0624

Rule Identification: Hunting Raccoons with hounds by nonresidents.

Decribe Change: Allow nonresidents to hunt raccoons with the aid of hounds. With a limit of one raccoon able to be harvested per day per licensed hunter.

Reason for Change: This rule change for many of us residents would open the oportunity to hunt with nonresident friends and family who also enjoy the sport of racoon hunting with hounds. Also this would allow nonresidents to take part in racoon hunting events in South Dakota . We allow nonresidents to hunt many other game small game species already here in South Dakota and with the current abundant racoon population there should be no reason to not allow racoon as an option for nonresidents. With a limit of one raccoon per day per licensed hunter this would eliminate any conflicts or concerns of over take by nonresident houndsmen.

GAME, FISH AND PARKS COMMISSION ACTION FINALIZATION

PARK ENTRANCE LICENSE EXEMPTIONS

Chapters 41:03:03:03.1 & 41:03:03:03.2

Commission Meeting Dates	Proposal	September 7, 2023	Watertown
	Public Hearing	October 5, 2023	Deadwood
	Finalization	October 5-6, 2023	Deadwood

COMMISSION PROPOSAL

Proposed changes:

The proposed rule change will remove two dates from the park entrance license exemption.

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

The Division of Parks and Recreation has offered the Open House park entrance license exemption for several decades. It has been used to help market state parks to those that have never used a state park before and give them an opportunity to visit a state park for free during that weekend. Mother’s Day and Father’s Day were added to the list of dates in 2019 with the intent to offer a unique opportunity for families to get engaged with the outdoors. After several years of evaluating these events, it has been estimated that those that take advantage of these offers is minimal. Mother’s Day is very early in the season when weather is questionable, and usage is low. Father’s Day takes place when most people have already purchased a license and is very close to the Open House and Memorial Day weekend as well. The Department would like to offer the weekend prior to Memorial Day as an opportunity for users to experience the state parks and explore the rebranding of Open House weekend for other marketing efforts as well.

DRAFT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE CHANGES

The following are proposed draft changes that are intended to incorporate the recommended changes adopted by the Commission.

41:03:03:03.01. Park entrance license exemptions. Park entrance license exemptions are as follows:

- (1) A person who enters a state park or state recreation area in volunteer service to the park or as a volunteer worker with an assigned role at an event requiring a special permit pursuant to § 41:03:01:04 is exempt from payment of the daily park entrance license fee if the person has received a special free park entrance license from the secretary;
- (2) A park entrance license is not required at Custer State Park on the day of the fall buffalo roundup or on the day of the annual buffalo auction;
- (3) A recreational motorhome towing one other vehicle is considered one unit and must purchase only one park entrance license. The second vehicle will be issued a free park entrance license that is dated to expire on the last day of the visitor's stay;
- (4) Enrolled Crow Creek tribal members and their families are not required to purchase a park entrance license to enter West Bend Recreational Area;
- (5) Enrolled Yankton Sioux tribal members and their families are not required to purchase a park entrance license to enter North Point Recreation Area, Fort Randall South Shore Recreation Area, Randall Creek Recreation Area, or Fort Randall Spillway Lakeside Use Area;

(6) A resident nonprofit youth group that enters a state park or state recreation area is not required to purchase a park entrance license, if the group obtains an approved nonprofit youth group permit from the park manager before entering the park. The park manager shall issue special free park entrance licenses to vehicles used by the youth group. The nonprofit youth group must obtain the permit at least five days prior to entering the park; and

(7) Members and guests of a South Dakota veterans organization or group, South Dakota National Guard or military reserve unit and guests, or patients currently admitted to a veterans hospital in this state and their attendants who enter a state park or state recreation area for a non-competitive special event that is hosted by the organization, group, unit, or hospital, are not required to purchase a park entrance license, if an approved special event permit has been obtained from the park manager at least five days before the special event. The park manager shall issue special free park entrance licenses to vehicles used by participants of the approved non-competitive special event.

(8) A park entrance license is not required at any state park, recreation area, or lakeside use area from 6:00 a.m. on Friday through 11:00 p.m. on Sunday of the weekend in May preceding Memorial Day weekend.

A resident of this state who is entitled to a free lifetime park entrance license as provided in SDCL [41-17-13.4](#) shall fill out a form provided by the Division of Parks and Recreation and mail it to the Pierre office with a photocopy of the veteran's "K" award or a letter from the Veteran's Administration indicating that the veteran receives an allotment for total disability, which is deemed a service-connected injury, or that the veteran was held as a prisoner of war. The lifetime park entrance license allows the licensee and any passengers accompanying the licensee in the vehicle to enter any South Dakota state park, state recreation area, or lakeside use area, which requires a park entrance license.

Source: 11 SDR 22, effective August 9, 1984; 17 SDR 188, effective June 13, 1991, and July 1, 1991; 18 SDR 223, effective July 13, 1992; 19 SDR 128, effective March 9, 1993; 19 SDR 190, effective June 15, 1993; 20 SDR 150, effective March 23, 1994; 21 SDR 207, effective June 5, 1995; 23 SDR 87, effective December 3, 1996; 24 SDR 99, effective February 2, 1998; 27 SDR 13, effective August 27, 2000; 28 SDR 24, effective August 28, 2001; 28 SDR 103, effective January 30, 2002; 29 SDR 107, effective February 3, 2003; 31 SDR 39, effective September 23, 2004; 31 SDR 89, effective December 27, 2004; 31 SDR 191, effective June, 7, 2005; 32 SDR 183, effective May 9, 2006; 32 SDR 225, effective July 3, 2006; 33 SDR 225, effective June 25, 2007; 36 SDR 39, effective September 23, 2009; 40 SDR 14, effective July 29, 2013; 43 SDR 131, effective April 19, 2017; 45 SDR 155, effective June 24, 2019; 46 SDR 74, effective December 2, 2019; 47 SDR 27, effective September 15, 2020.

General Authority: SDCL [41-17-1.1\(2\)\(10\)](#), [41-17-13](#), [41-17-13.4](#).

Law Implemented: SDCL [41-17-1.1\(2\)\(10\)](#), [41-17-13](#), [41-17-13.2](#), [41-17-13.4](#).

41:03:03:03.02. Open house park entrance license exemption. ~~A park entrance license is not required at any state park, recreation area, or lakeside use area:~~

- ~~(1) From 6:00 a.m. on Friday through 11:00 p.m. on Sunday on the weekend in May preceding Memorial Day weekend;~~
- ~~(2) From 6:00 a.m. through 11:00 p.m. on the second Sunday in May; and~~
- ~~(3) From 6:00 a.m. through 11:00 p.m. on the third Sunday through June.~~

Source: 11 SDR 133, effective April 7, 1985; 12 SDR 102, effective December 22, 1985; 13 SDR 68, effective December 11, 1986; 14 SDR 114, effective March 9, 1988; 15 SDR 139, effective March 20, 1989; 18 SDR 98, effective December 12, 1991; 19 SDR 128, effective March 9, 1993; 29 SDR 80, effective December 10, 2002; 46 SDR 74, effective December 2, 2019.

~~General Authority: SDCL [41-17-1.1\(2\)](#), [41-17-13](#).~~

~~Law Implemented: SDCL [41-17-1.1\(2\)](#), [41-17-13](#), [41-17-13.2](#).~~

FISCAL IMPACT

The described changes would result in a minimal fiscal impact on the Department's budget.

APPROVE _____ MODIFY _____ REJECT _____ NO ACTION _____

GAME, FISH, AND PARKS COMMISSION ACTION FINALIZATION

Hunt for Habitat Licenses

Chapter 41:06:61

Commission Meeting Dates:	Proposal	September 7-8, 2023	Watertown
	Public Hearing	October 5, 2023	Deadwood
	Finalization	October 5-6, 2023	Deadwood

COMMISSION PROPOSAL

Duration of Proposal: Beginning in 2024

Licenses: Licenses issued may not exceed 10 big game animals annually and currently include: one “any bison”; and three license packages each including one “any deer”, one “any antelope” and one “any elk”.

Season dates and open units: Valid during any dates and open units permitted by the requirements and restrictions for each hunting season.

Requirements and Restrictions:

1. The Commission may provide for a special license that allows a person to hunt one or more game animals and shall promulgate rules, pursuant to chapter 1-26, to establish the season and guidelines for the season, and to establish the fee provisions.
2. The Commission may establish a nonrefundable application fee, not to exceed ten dollars for any resident and not to exceed twenty dollars for any nonresident, to apply for the special license.
3. Any resident or nonresident who is eligible to hold a hunting license in this state may submit an unlimited number of applications for Hunt For Habitat licenses. Unsuccessful applicants will not accrue preference points for these drawings.
4. Successful applicants shall be selected by drawing.
5. Tags issued with a Hunt For Habitat hunting license are valid during any hunting season provided in Article 41:06 that allows the licensee to take any animal that is permitted if the licensee abides by the requirements and restrictions for the hunting season.
6. Each Hunt For Habitat license/tag shall be valid during the calendar year of drawing or subsequent calendar year.
7. Proceeds from the application fee collected shall be used for habitat programs.
8. The Commission shall, before the fourth Tuesday in January of each year, report to the Senate and House standing committees on agriculture and natural resources and on appropriations regarding the activities authorized by this section. The report shall include a description of the season established, the number of licenses issued, the amount of revenue generated, and the progress of the habitat programs funded under this section.

Changes from last year: Modify administrative rule to adjust licenses that are issued in the Hunt For Habitat drawing. These adjustments include the creation of two “any deer” single-tag licenses and the removal of one “any antelope” license from the three-license package that is currently available, resulting in a two-license package including one “any deer” and one “any elk” tag. As a result, only nine tags will be issued to six individuals, including one “any bison”, two “any deer”, and three “any deer” plus “any elk” packages. Previously, ten tags were issued to four individuals, including one “any bison” and three license packages with three tags each.

License Package	Number of License Packages	
	Current	Proposed
Trophy Bison	1	1
Antelope, Deer and Elk (3 tags/package)	3	0
Deer	0	2
Deer and Elk (2 tags/package)	0	3

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Recommended changes from proposal: None.

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

The authority for the GFP Commission to create the Hunt For Habitat raffle was established by the South Dakota Legislature in 2019 to generate additional revenue for wildlife habitat. GFP anticipates the proposed modifications combined with enhanced marketing efforts will generate additional revenue towards GFP's raffle license revenue goal of \$500,000 in 2024. The "any antelope" tags will be removed from the three license packages and two "any deer" license packages will be added to provide an opportunity for two additional license packages with a total of nine licenses.

Nearly \$1.4 million has been generated from Hunt For Habitat raffle license application fees from 2019 to 2023.

Year	Revenue
2019	\$320,950
2020	\$392,210
2021	\$329,920
2022	\$194,580
2023	\$245,840

DRAFT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE CHANGES

41:06:62:03. Number of licenses. One "any bison" license, two "any deer" licenses, and three license packages with one "any deer", ~~one "any antelope"~~ and one "any elk" license may be issued. Both residents and nonresidents shall be eligible to receive the single-tag deer licenses, the license packages and the "any bison" license ~~and the triple-tag licenses~~ although no more than one ~~triple-tag~~ license package may be issued to a nonresident.

Source: 45 SDR 155, effective June 24, 2019.

General Authority: SDCL 41-2-18(1)(2)(17), 41-6-84.

Law Implemented: SDCL [41-2-18\(1\)\(2\)\(17\)](#), 41-6-84.

RESIDENT/NONRESIDENT CRITERIA

1. The Issue – NA
2. Historical Considerations – NA
3. Biological Considerations – NA
4. Social Considerations – NA
5. Financial considerations – NA

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, REACTIVATION (R3) CRITERIA

1. Does the regulation or fee inhibit a user's ability to participate? NA
2. Does the regulation increase the opportunity for new and existing users? Two more individuals may be successful for a Hunt For Habitat license.
3. How does the regulation impact the next generation of hunters, anglers, trappers, and outdoor recreationists? NA
4. Does the regulation enhance the quality of life for current and future generations by getting families outdoors? NA

FISCAL IMPACT

GFP anticipates approximately \$250,000 of additional revenue in 2024.

APPROVE _____ **MODIFY** _____ **REJECT** _____ **NO ACTION** _____



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2023

OCT 1	2024 Park Entrance License Available
OCT 13	Fireside Flannels at Good Earth State Park Night of Thrills and Chills at Fort Sisseton Historic State Park
OCT 14	Fall Hike and Nature Craft at Pelican Lake Recreation Area Trunk or Treat at Lewis and Clark Recreation Area Trick or Treat at Fort Sisseton Historic State Park
OCT 20 & 21	Halloween Night Hike at Custer State Park
OCT 28	Trick or Treat Trails at Big Sioux Recreation Area Lantern Tour at Fort Sisseton Historic State Park Mortimer's Monstrous Halloween at Oakwood Lakes State Park Forest Drive Fright Night at Richmond Lake Recreation Area Spooktacular at the Spillway at North Point Recreation Area Meet the Creepy Crawlers at Good Earth State Park
OCT 29	Trick or Treat Trails at LaFramboise Island Nature Area Halloween Hobble at Pelican Lake Recreation Area

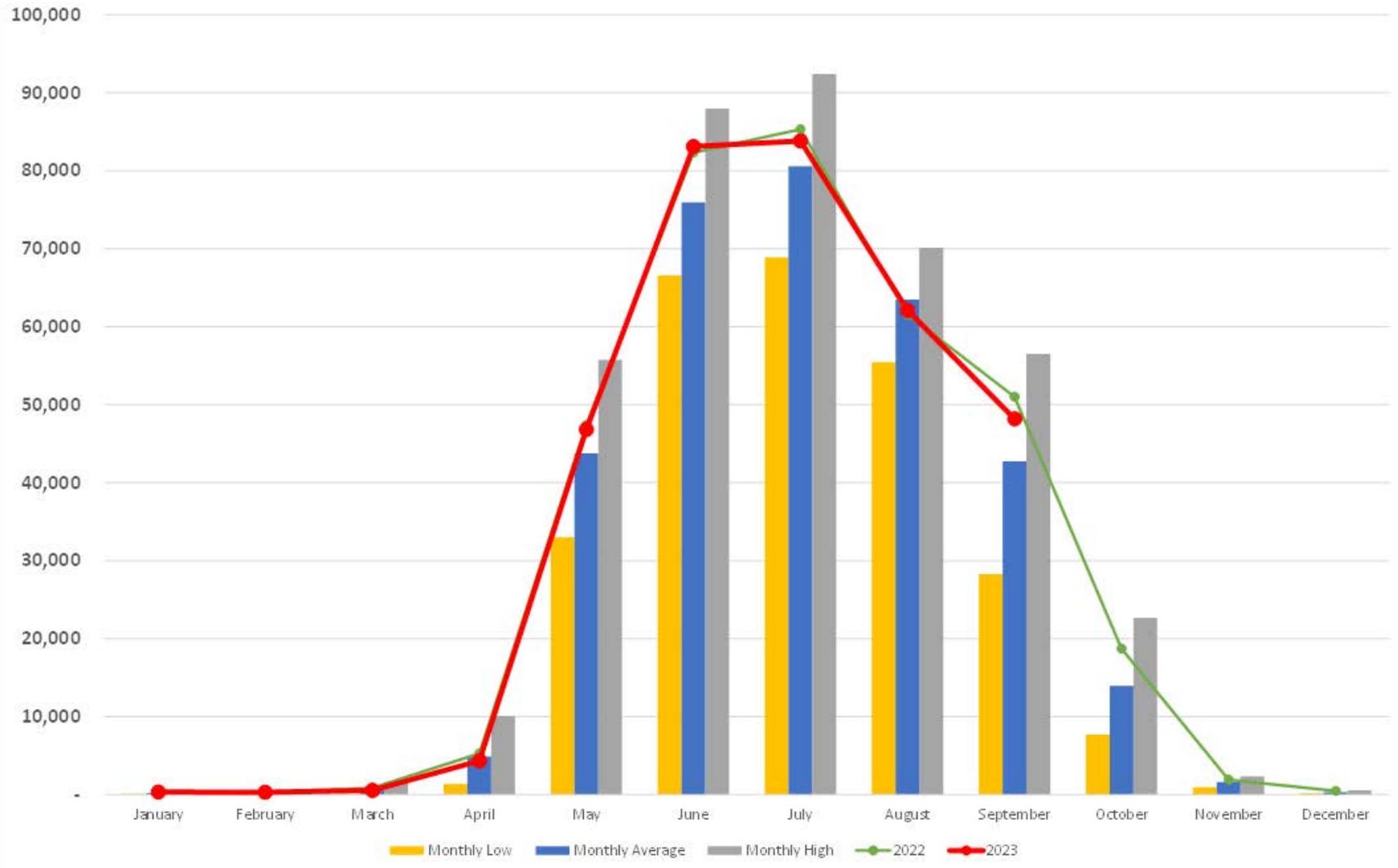
November 2023

NOV 4	Murder Mystery Dinner at Fort Sisseton Historic State Park Nature Crafts at Pelican Lake Recreation Area
NOV 7	Fall Campfire Cooking at Pelican Lake Recreation Area
NOV 9	History of the Hiawatha Asylum
NOV 11	Christmas at Adam's Homestead and Nature Preserve

VISIT [GFP.SD.GOV/EVENTS](https://gfp.sd.gov/events) FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF EVENTS

Division of Parks and Recreation							
September YTD 2023 Camping by District							
LOCATION	2022	2023	%	LOCATION	2022	2023	%
Pickereel Lake	5,541	5,211	-6%	North Point	10,098	9,156	-9%
Fort Sisseton	1,393	1,700	22%	North Wheeler	1,077	1,013	-6%
Roy Lake	7,793	7,791	0%	Pease Creek	1,888	1,818	-4%
Sica Hollow	194	176	-9%	Randall Creek	6,349	6,568	3%
DISTRICT 1	14,921	14,878	0%	South Shore	400	409	2%
Richmond Lake	1,811	1,734	-4%	South Scalp	91	94	3%
Mina Lake	3,080	3,028	-2%	Whetstone	435	392	-10%
Fisher Grove	1,340	1,284	-4%	White Swan	202	192	-5%
Amsden	175	359	105%	DISTRICT 10	20,540	19,642	-4%
Lake Louise	1,903	2,096	10%	Farm Island	7,702	7,415	-4%
DISTRICT 2	8,309	8,501	2%	West Bend	8,102	7,450	-8%
Pelican Lake	6,146	6,170	0%	DISTRICT 11	15,804	14,865	-6%
Sandy Shore	1,763	1,628	-8%	Oahe Downstream	13,115	12,843	-2%
Lake Cochrane	2,178	2,091	-4%	Cow Creek	2,599	2,775	7%
Hartford Beach	6,403	6,556	2%	Okobojo	1,517	1,235	-19%
DISTRICT 3	16,490	16,445	0%	Spring Creek	835	833	0%
Oakwood Lakes	8,761	8,838	1%	DISTRICT 12	18,066	17,686	-2%
Lake Poinsett	8,249	7,935	-4%	West Whitlock	4,868	4,517	-7%
Lake Thompson	7,512	7,550	1%	East Whitlock	46	53	15%
DISTRICT 4	24,522	24,323	-1%	Swan Creek	664	760	14%
Lake Herman	5,684	5,762	1%	Indian Creek	7,512	7,221	-4%
Walker's Point	2,925	2,877	-2%	Lake Hiddenwood	88	161	83%
Lake Carthage	819	982	20%	Walth Bay	22	49	123%
DISTRICT 5	9,428	9,621	2%	West Pollock	831	1,062	28%
Snake Creek	7,973	7,897	-1%	DISTRICT 13	14,031	13,823	-1%
Platte Creek	1,555	1,549	0%	Bear Butte	1,414	1,432	1%
Buryanek	2,697	2,814	4%	DISTRICT 14	1,414	1,432	1%
Burke Lake	97	31	-68%	Shadehill	6,430	6,839	6%
Dude Ranch	215	214	0%	Llewellyn Johns	452	439	-3%
Elm Creek	45	56	24%	Rocky Point	6,436	6,501	1%
DISTRICT 6	12,322	12,291	0%	DISTRICT 15	13,318	13,779	3%
Palisades	5,497	5,528	1%	Custer	50,473	51,632	2%
Big Sioux	6,710	7,023	5%	DISTRICT 16	50,473	51,632	2%
Lake Vermillion	11,109	11,466	3%	Angostura	17,628	16,605	-6%
DISTRICT 7	23,316	24,017	3%	Sheps Canyon	1,897	2,061	9%
Newton Hills	10,379	9,885	-5%	DISTRICT 17	19,525	18,666	-4%
Good Earth	-	-		TOTAL YTD	334,679	330,401	-1%
Union Grove	1,231	1,349	10%	TOTAL for Month	51,106	48,287	-6%
DISTRICT 8	11,610	11,234	-3%				
Lewis & Clark	40,921	39,001	-5%				
Chief White Crane	12,362	11,199	-9%				
Clay County	870	1,809	108%				
Pierson Ranch	4,758	4,293	-10%				
Springfield	1,425	1,156	-19%				
Sand Creek	170	62	-64%				
Tabor	84	46	-45%				
DISTRICT 9	60,590	57,566	-5%				

State Park and Recreation Area
Camping Units by Month
2012-2023 Data



Division of Parks and Recreation					
September Revenue by Item					
	2022		2023		%
	Number	Dollar	Number	Dollar	
Annual	4,519	\$ 162,684	5,912	\$ 212,840	31%
2nd Annual	623	\$ 11,214	555	\$ 9,990	-11%
Combo	2,500	\$ 134,982	3,587	\$ 193,692	43%
Transferable	24	\$ 1,920	40	\$ 3,200	67%
Daily License	13,073	\$ 104,584	15,888	\$ 127,104	22%
Unattended Vehicle Daily	194	\$ 2,910	210	\$ 3,150	8%
GSM Annual Trail Pass	337	\$ 5,055	812	\$ 12,180	141%
GSM Daily Trail Pass	2,772	\$ 11,088	3,830	\$ 15,320	38%
Motorcoach Permit	2,647	\$ 7,941	3,189	\$ 9,567	20%
CSP 7 Day Pass	30,378	\$ 607,560	34,402	\$ 688,040	13%
CSP 7 Day Bike Pass	2,058	\$ 41,160	2,285	\$ 45,700	11%
Rally Bike Band	-				
One-Day Special Event		\$ -	0	\$ 2,200	
PERMITS	59,125	\$ 1,091,098	70,710	\$ 1,322,983	21%
Camping Services		\$ 950,788		\$ 916,993	-4%
Picnic Reservations		\$ 660		\$ 2,775	320%
Firewood	6,443	\$ 38,658	4,885	\$ 29,310	-24%
Gift Card		\$ 342		\$ 136	-60%
Boat Slips		\$ -		\$ -	
LODGING	6,443	\$ 990,448	4,885	\$ 949,213	-4%
TOTAL	65,568	\$ 2,081,546	75,595	\$ 2,272,196	9%

Division of Parks and Recreation					
September YTD 2023 Revenue by Item					
	2022		2023		%
	Number	Dollar	Number	Dollar	
Annual	57,661	\$ 2,075,782	57,090	\$ 2,055,242	-1%
2nd Annual	9,563	\$ 172,134	9,206	\$ 165,712	-4%
Double	33,562	\$ 1,812,366	35,574	\$ 1,920,978	6%
Transferable	2,325	\$ 186,000	2,493	\$ 199,410	7%
Daily License	96,688	\$ 773,502	102,374	\$ 818,995	6%
Unattended Vehicle Daily	1,140	\$ 17,105	922	\$ 13,830	-19%
GSM Annual Trail Pass	4,500	\$ 67,500	5,225	\$ 78,375	16%
GSM Daily Trail Pass	13,105	\$ 52,420	15,690	\$ 62,760	20%
Motorcoach Permit	10,315	\$ 30,945	14,154	\$ 42,462	37%
CSP 7 Day Pass	168,056	\$ 3,361,120	174,826	\$ 3,496,520	4%
CSP 7 Day Bike Band	16,226	\$ 324,520	18,741	\$ 374,820	15%
Rally Bike Band	29,558	\$ 591,160	26,233	\$ 524,660	-11%
One-Day Special Event		\$ 1,800		\$ 6,950	286%
PERMITS	442,699	\$ 9,466,354	462,528	\$ 9,760,714	3%
Camping Services		\$ 12,912,962		\$ 12,100,129	-6%
Picnic Reservations		\$ 11,265		\$ 21,750	93%
Firewood	34,178	\$ 205,068	35,122	\$ 210,732	3%
Gift Card		\$ 8,645		\$ 9,176	6%
Boat Slips		\$ 182,739		\$ 197,494	8%
LODGING	34,178	\$ 13,320,678	35,122	\$ 12,539,281	-6%
TOTAL	476,877	\$ 22,787,032	497,650	\$ 22,299,995	-2%

GAME, FISH AND PARKS COMMISSION ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Nonresident 1-Day Fishing License

Commission Meeting: September 7-8, 2023 Watertown
 October 5-6, 2023 Deadwood

Nonresident 1-Day Fishing License Recommendation

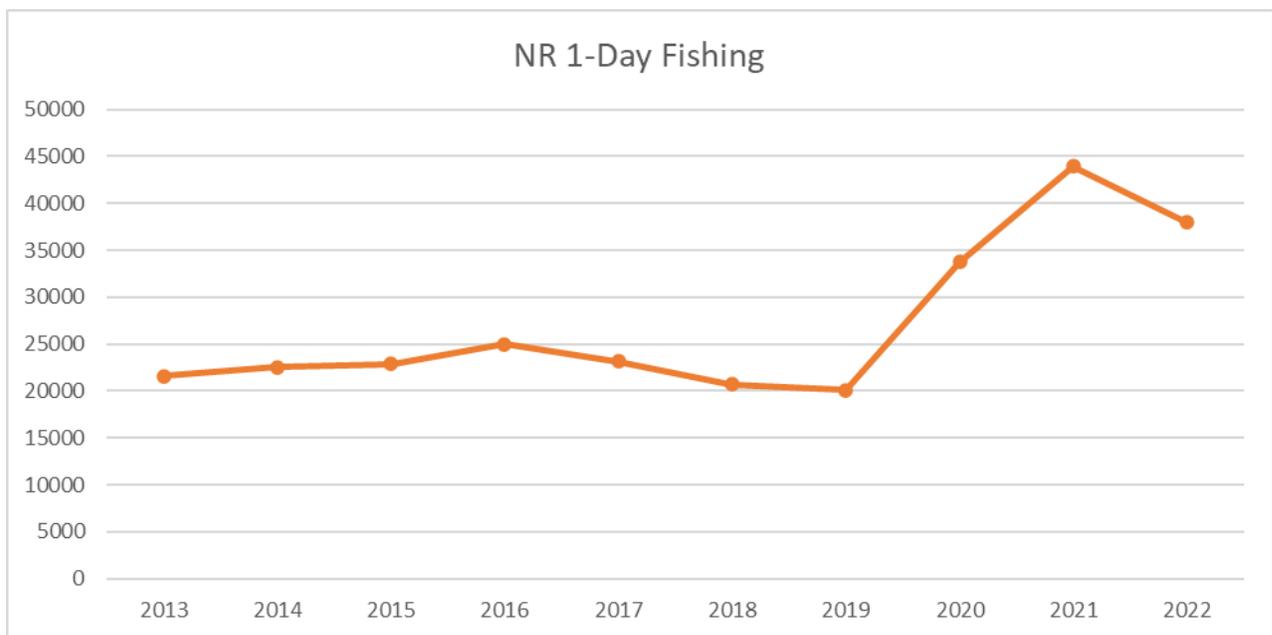
Department recommendation:

Beginning with the 2024 license year (December 15, 2023), remove the 1-day nonresident fishing license option.

SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

Currently there are three license types available to nonresidents fishing in South Dakota. Since 2020, there has been a spike in the number of 1-day licenses purchased, which also coincides with the implementation of the Habitat Stamp and the removal of the family fishing license option for nonresidents. One of the exceptions outlined in state statute associated with purchasing a 1-day hunting or fishing license is a Habitat Stamp.

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Habitat Stamp</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
1-Day License	\$16		\$16
3-Day License	\$37	\$25	\$62
Annual License	\$67	\$25	\$92



A nonresident can purchase three 1-day fishing licenses at a more economical rate than purchasing a 3-day or annual license which also includes a \$25 Habitat Stamp. Since 2021, 88%-90% of nonresidents purchasing a 1-day fishing license never purchased a Habitat Stamp. Reviewing the number of individuals purchasing 1-day licenses it is estimated that the removal of the 1-day fishing license would result in a positive fiscal impact ranging from \$500,000 to \$1,300,000.

# OF LICENSES PURCHASED	2021		2022		2023 as of July 31	
	COUNT OF CID	Total Lic Sold	COUNT OF CID	Total Lic Sold	Count of CID	Total Lic Sold
1	20,499	20,499	16,806	16,806	12,504	12,504
2	6,845	13,690	6,391	12,782	4,564	9,128
3	2,237	6,711	1,926	5,778	1,117	3,351
4	520	2,080	443	1,772	223	892
5	90	450	75	375	25	125
6	42	252	43	258	16	96
7	22	154	6	42	2	14
8	8	64	7	56	1	8
9	4	36	6	54		
10	1	10	1	10		
11			1	11		
12						
13						
14			1	14		
15					1	15
16						
17			1	17		

APPROVE _____	MODIFY _____	REJECT _____	NO ACTION _____
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SOUTH DAKOTA BIGHORN SHEEP ACTION PLAN 2023–2027



**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH AND PARKS
PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA**

WILDLIFE DIVISION REPORT 2023–02AP

SEPTEMBER 2023

This document is for general, strategic guidance for the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP) and serves to identify what we strive to accomplish related to bighorn sheep management. By itself this document is of little value; the value is in its implementation. This process will emphasize working cooperatively with interested publics in both the planning process and the regular program activities related to bighorn sheep management. This plan will be used by Department staff and Commission on an annual basis and will be formally evaluated every four years. Plan updates and changes, however, may occur more frequently as needed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan is a product of substantial discussion and input from many wildlife professionals and the South Dakota public sector. In addition, those comments and suggestions received from private landowners, hunters, and those who recognize the value of bighorn sheep and their associated habitats were also considered.

Management Plan Coordinator – Chad Lehman, South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (SDGFP).

SDGFP Bighorn Sheep Management Plan Team that assisted with plan writing, data review and analyses, critical reviews and/or edits to the South Dakota Bighorn Sheep Management Plan – Trenton Haffley, John Kanta, Brady Neiles, Mandy Pearson, and Andrew Norton.

All text and data contained within this document are subject to revision for corrections, updates, and data analyses.

Cover photo courtesy of Dennie Mann.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This action plan will outline bighorn sheep management priorities, objectives and strategies for 2023-2027. We encourage readers to reference the "Bighorn Sheep Management Document, 2018-2027" for information not contained in this document.

Mountain sheep, also known as bighorn sheep in some geographic areas, embody wildness as they are legendary in their ability to negotiate precipitous terrain and survive in some of the most desolate areas of North America. Bighorn sheep were numerous on the prairies of western South Dakota and the Black Hills before their extirpation in the late 1890s. United States Senator Peter Norbeck orchestrated their reintroduction in the early 1920s and this began a conservation success story where bighorns once again occupied their native habitats. This management action plan provides important historical background and relevant biological information for the sustainable management of bighorn sheep. Current bighorn sheep survey methodology and relevant biological literature are presented, along with a thorough discussion of objectives and strategies to guide management of this important resource into the future. This plan is intended to guide managers and biologists over the next four years but should be considered a working document that will be amended as new biological and social data provide opportunities to improve management of bighorn sheep resources in South Dakota. Since their successful reintroduction in the early 1920s, bighorn populations have fluctuated greatly over time in western South Dakota. Respiratory disease largely caused by bacteria remains the most prominent factor impacting bighorn sheep restoration in western South Dakota, consistent across other North American herds. Several herds have been decimated by pneumonia die-offs and trapping and translocation efforts have either restored or helped maintain bighorn populations in South Dakota. Disease research and advancements in methodologies may provide important tools for managers to maintain healthy populations of this species into the future. For the management of bighorn sheep, the following objectives have been identified: 1) management and monitoring of disease pathogens in bighorn sheep herds across South Dakota; 2) annually determine status of bighorn sheep populations; 3) bi-annually review and formulate bighorn sheep management objectives; use harvest strategies to manage the population with the available resource; 4) maintain, manage, and protect existing bighorn sheep habitat and augment populations to either maintain or start new herds in vacant habitat in South Dakota; 5) continue to use science-based research, habitat inventories, and surveys to answer questions related to bighorn sheep ecology and public attitudes towards bighorn sheep management; and 6) the SDGFP will inform and educate the public on bighorn sheep ecology, management, research, and provide viewing opportunities.

The "*South Dakota Bighorn Sheep Action Plan 2023-2027*" will serve as the guiding document for decision making and implementation of actions to ensure bighorn sheep populations and their habitats are managed appropriately. The SDGFP will work closely with other public land managers, private landowners, and sportsmen and women to overcome the challenges and take advantage of opportunities regarding the future management of bighorn sheep in South Dakota.

Introduction

Mountain sheep, also known as bighorn sheep in some geographic areas, embody wildness as they are legendary in their ability to negotiate precipitous terrain and survive in some of the most desolate areas of North America. Bighorn sheep were numerous on the prairies of western South Dakota and the Black Hills before their extirpation in the late 1890s. After extirpation, the reintroduction of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (*O. c. canadensis*) began in the early 1900s. In 1922, Peter Norbeck worked with Alberta Canada to obtain eight Rocky Mountain bighorns for release into Custer State Park (CSP) within the Black Hills. Since their successful reintroduction in the early 1920s, bighorn populations have fluctuated greatly over time in western South Dakota. Respiratory disease largely caused by bacteria, remains the most prominent factor impacting bighorn sheep restoration in western South Dakota which is consistent across other North American herds. Several herds have been decimated by pneumonia die-offs and trapping and translocation efforts have either restored or helped maintain bighorn populations in South Dakota. Translocation efforts have continued as populations have fluctuated over time and the most recent efforts included bighorns from Alberta being released in the Deadwood area of the Black Hills, and from Badlands National Park to CSP.

Surveys and Monitoring

Bighorn sheep are surveyed using ground counts to obtain minimum counts, lamb:ewe ratios, ram:ewe ratios, and using radio-telemetry with mark-resight techniques to estimate population size. Ground counts are used to estimate the minimum number of sheep for herds in the Badlands and Black Hills (Table 1). Ratio data includes lamb:ewe and ram:ewe for each herd (Table 2). Bighorn sheep are classified as lambs, ewes, and rams using body form and horn size; rams are further classified into categories I, II, III, and IV (Geist 1968).

Harvest Strategy

For the management of a bighorn sheep herd, it is recommended to potentially close a Bighorn Sheep Hunting Unit (Figure 1) when <50 sheep are observed during surveys. Further, it is recommended opening a season on bighorn sheep when 3 criteria are met: 1) ≥ 50 sheep are observed during surveys, 2) observe a ram:ewe ratio of ≥ 30 rams/100 ewes, and 3) observe a lamb:ewe ratio of ≥ 30 lambs/100 ewes. Generally, ram harvest will be set at 10% of the available rams in a herd for management units in South Dakota. However, harvest could be set above 10% of the available rams in a herd during disease events or under special circumstances depending upon sex and age ratios and population size (Table 3).

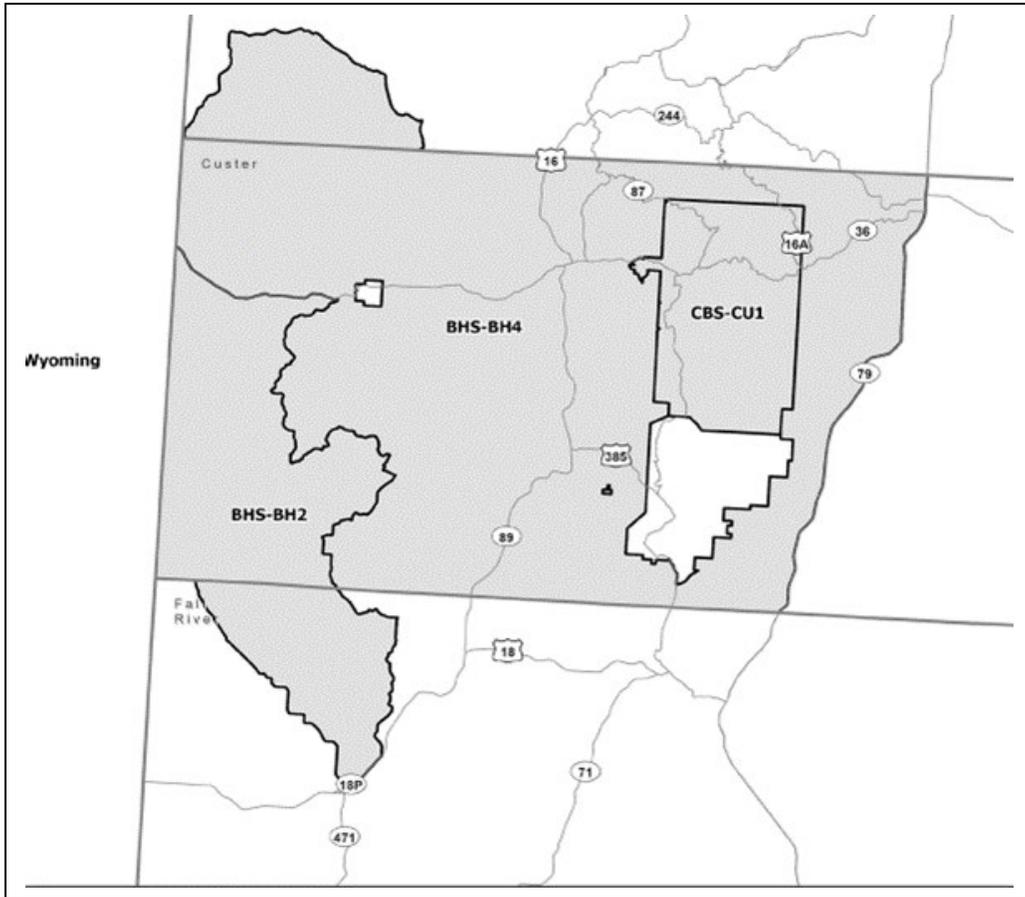


Figure 1. Bighorn Sheep Hunting Units Map (BHS-BH2- Custer and Fall River counties, BHS-BH4- Custer and Pennington counties, and CBS-CU1- Custer State Park) for South Dakota in 2023.

Carrying capacity of South Dakota’s bighorn ranges is currently unknown; however, the decision support table in Table 4 can be used to guide management of ewes. Research evaluating ewe harvest suggests a harvest of 7% of the preseason population, 10% of the total winter population, or 12% of the summer population of ewes is needed to stabilize a herd under normal conditions. It is assumed a harvest rate of 10% or more is needed to reduce the size of individual herds that are stable or growing. Translocation of excess ewes should always be considered prior to the implementation of harvest.

Table 1. Survey data from ground counts which represent the minimum number of sheep estimated for each population in the Badlands and Black Hills, South Dakota, 2007-2022.

Year	Badlands	Custer State Park	Rapid City	Elk Mountain	Hell Canyon	Deadwood
2007	89	35	81	NA	NA	NA
2008	97	35	84	54	NA	NA
2009	67	37	100	52	NA	NA
2010	64	29	98	48	NA	NA
2011	86	26	72	75	NA	NA
2012	110	25	68	87	NA	NA
2013	85	26	65	70	20	NA
2014	85	25	56	57	25	NA
2015	151	25	55	46	47	26
2016	147	26	55	70	34	24
2017	191	29	45	67	41	18
2018	205	43	43	83	57	18
2019	166	63	33	57	76	20
2020	201	86	30	48	82	23
2021	60	80	36	69	78	18
2022	60	99	37	77	69	26

Disease

Respiratory disease largely caused by bacteria (*Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* [*M. ovi*]) remains the most prominent negative factor impacting bighorn sheep restoration in North America. A host of other diseases can inflict bighorn sheep such as infectious keratoconjunctivitis, contagious ecthyma, partuberculosis (Johne's disease), sinus tumors, lungworm, and hemorrhagic disease. Bighorn sheep can be hosts for internal and ectoparasites as well. However, *M. ovi* induced pneumonia outbreaks have been the dominant mortality factor impacting bighorns in South Dakota and across the west.

Several *M. ovi* strains have been documented to occur in bighorn sheep, domestic sheep and goats, and mountain goats across South Dakota bighorn sheep range. Researchers in South Dakota have documented bighorn disease die-offs in 4 populations related to pneumonia from *M. ovi* since 2004. To recover these populations, SDGFP and its collaborators have implemented the test-and-remove method in all 4 populations. In 3 of the populations (CSP, Rapid City, and Deadwood herds) this method has successfully removed the *M. ovi* pathogen and allowed lamb survival to recover to normal levels. Most recently, the test-and-remove method was initiated in the Badlands herd in 2023. The test-and-remove method was important in reducing pneumonia related mortality in both adults and lambs and allowed recovery in 3 populations. Although test-and-remove has proven successful in restoring bighorn populations in South Dakota, this method is very expensive and time consuming as a management option.

Table 2. Ground counts using the maximum number of ewes, lambs, and rams counted for the given year. Counts provide ratio data of sheep estimated for each population in the Badlands and Black Hills, South Dakota, 2007-2022.

Lamb:Ewe Ratios						
Year	Badlands	Custer State Park	Rapid City	Elk Mountain	Hell Canyon	Deadwood
2007	0.77	0.07	0.10	NA	NA	NA
2008	0.66	0.07	0.28	0.51	NA	NA
2009	0.48	0.06	0.32	0.42	NA	NA
2010	0.48	0.00	0.17	0.47	NA	NA
2011	0.48	0.00	0.06	0.60	NA	NA
2012	0.50	0.33	0.06	0.54	NA	NA
2013	0.47	0.50	0.14	0.63	0.27	NA
2014	0.47	0.28	0.19	0.22	0.75	NA
2015	0.44	0.21	0.11	0.63	0.44	0.81
2016	0.38	0.82	0.22	0.72	0.67	0.17
2017	0.39	0.25	0.21	1.10	0.45	0.06
2018	0.58	0.38	0.11	0.73	0.71	NA
2019	0.53	0.38	0.40	0.16	0.47	0.29
2020	0.51	0.82	0.62	0.60	0.54	0.31
2021	NA	0.49	0.41	0.14	0.34	0.30
2022	NA	0.78	0.43	0.47	0.41	1.10
Ram:Ewe Ratios						
Year	Badlands	Custer State Park	Rapid City	Elk Mountain	Hell Canyon	Deadwood
2007	0.46	0.53	0.78	NA	NA	NA
2008	0.34	0.53	0.54	0.03	NA	NA
2009	0.24	0.53	0.41	0.58	NA	NA
2010	1.09	0.43	0.29	1.35	NA	NA
2011	0.48	0.50	0.41	0.90	NA	NA
2012	0.44	0.50	0.38	0.81	NA	NA
2013	0.51	0.88	0.35	0.96	0.07	NA
2014	0.51	0.32	0.32	0.89	0.33	NA
2015	0.31	0.57	0.34	0.79	0.30	0.05
2016	0.31	0.55	0.31	1.08	1.17	0.17
2017	0.62	0.56	0.41	1.10	0.60	0.06
2018	1.01	0.67	0.48	0.79	1.65	NA
2019	0.66	0.47	0.60	1.84	0.76	0.14
2020	0.75	0.39	0.69	1.60	0.80	0.13
2021	NA	0.68	0.71	0.73	0.71	0.50
2022	NA	0.70	1.21	0.67	0.62	0.50

Table 3. Decision support table to guide harvest of bighorn rams in South Dakota.

Guiding Factors
^a Ram harvest will occur when: 1) ≥ 50 sheep are observed during surveys, 2) observe a ram:ewe ratio of ≥ 30 rams/100 ewes, and 3) observe a lamb:ewe ratio of ≥ 30 lambs/100 ewes.
↓
Survey of available rams in population
↓
Ram harvest will be set at 10% of the available rams in a herd. However, harvest could be set above 10% of the available rams in a herd during disease events or under special circumstances depending upon sex and age ratios and population size.

^aGeneral guidelines to follow in setting harvest; however, special circumstances may exist where seasons may be closed or opened where these requirements may not be met.

Table 4. Decision support table to guide harvest of bighorn ewes in South Dakota^a.

Guiding Factors	No Harvest	Maintenance Harvest	Reduction Harvest
Lamb to ewe ratio of lambs >4 months of age	Decreasing, stable or increasing	Stable	Stable or increasing
Three-year population trend	Decreasing, stable or increasing	Stable	Stable or increasing
Habitat degradation	Low	Moderate	High
Body condition	Moderate to good	Poor to good	Poor to good
Management action	↓	↓	↓
Targeted harvest percent of adult ewe population	0%	5-9%	10-15%

^aTranslocation of excess ewes should always be considered prior to the implementation of harvest.

Guiding Principles

The following statements have guided the development of the bighorn sheep management goals and objectives (Table 10) and reflect the collective values of SDGFP in relation to management of bighorn sheep in South Dakota:

- that wildlife, including bighorn sheep, contributes significantly to the quality of life in South Dakota and therefore must be sustained for future generations.
- that recreational hunting is a legitimate use of bighorn sheep and must be encouraged and preserved.
- that the collaboration among various agencies, including NPS, USFS, BLM, Tribes, and the State, is critical for the future of bighorn sheep and their habitats in South Dakota, and is deserving of recognition and respect.
- that reasonable regulations are necessary for equitable distribution of the benefits of wildlife, including bighorn sheep, and to promote ethical and safe behavior.
- that the future of wildlife, including bighorn sheep, depends on a public that appreciates, understands, and supports wildlife and in the public's right to participate in decisions related to wildlife issues.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

The goal for bighorn sheep management in South Dakota is to maximize user opportunity while maintaining populations consistent with ecological, social, aesthetic, and economic values of the people of South Dakota and our visitors.

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1. Management and monitoring of disease pathogens in bighorn sheep herds across South Dakota.

Strategy A. Continue to inventory and document domestic sheep and goats in areas adjacent to wild bighorn herds.

Strategy B. Work with conservation organizations to develop cooperative programs to discourage domestic sheep and goat ownership in areas adjacent to wild bighorn herds.

Strategy C. Continue to educate the public about bighorn sheep disease and the risk that domestic sheep and goats pose to wild sheep.

Strategy D. Continue to offer assistance to owners of domestic sheep and goats in an effort to minimize the risk of disease transmission to wild sheep.

- Strategy E. Manage and monitor bighorn sheep disease events and attempt to mitigate losses of bighorns through disease mitigation management when feasible; implement testing and removal of bighorns that are identified as shedders of *M. ovi.* in populations that are experiencing pneumonia die-offs in an attempt to recover these populations at a faster rate.
- Strategy F. Through trap-and-transfer augment established populations recovering from disease events that are at critically low population levels once *M. ovi.* are no longer detected.
- Strategy G. Implement Department policy (Appendix 1 Management Document) for the lethal take of bighorn sheep when associated with domestic sheep or goats.

Objective 2. Monitor the status of bighorn sheep populations.

- Strategy A. Annually conduct surveys including ground and hunter harvest. Males will be classified during surveys according to body and horn size (Geist 1968).
- Strategy B. Where feasible, conduct aerial surveys and obtain abundance estimates utilizing mark-resight or other methodologies.
- Strategy C. Supplement survey data with research findings when available.

Objective 3. Bi-annually review and set bighorn sheep management objectives; use harvest strategies to provide the public with the available resource.

- Strategy A. Bi-annually review bighorn harvest strategies, license allocation, and unit boundaries and develop 2-year recommendations based on available biological data, public input, and staff recommendations.
- Strategy B. Generally, ram harvest will be set at 10% of the available rams in a herd (Table 2). Harvest could be above 10% of the available rams in the herd during disease events or under additional special circumstances depending upon sex and age ratios and population size. We will take into account: 1) population size and trend, 2) lamb recruitment (lamb:ewe ratios), 3) some index to the number or availability of rams in the population (ram:ewe ratios, the number of mature rams estimated or seen during surveys, average age of harvested rams), and 4) trends in hunter success or hunter effort, or both, from recent hunting seasons.

- Strategy C. When feasible, use subunits and create new units to maximize hunting opportunities, distribute hunters, and minimize hunter conflicts. For the management of bighorn sheep a unit will be closed when <50 sheep are observed during surveys. A unit may get opened or reopened when 3 criteria are met: 1) ≥ 50 sheep are observed during surveys, 2) observed a ram:ewe ratio of ≥ 30 rams/100 ewes, and 3) observed a lamb:ewe ratio of ≥ 30 lambs/100 ewes.
- Strategy D. Maintain high hunter success rates (>90%) and/or high hunter satisfaction in all units.
- Strategy E. Ewe harvest can be implemented depending upon guiding factors found in the decision support table (Table 3). Translocation of excess ewes should always be considered prior to the implementation of sport harvest.

Objective 4. Maintain, manage, and protect existing bighorn sheep habitat and augment populations to either maintain or establish herds in vacant habitat in South Dakota.

- Strategy A. Maintain existing partnerships with the USFS, BLM, NPS, private landowners, and other state, local, and private conservation partners to support programs and practices encouraging proper bighorn sheep habitat management on public and private lands.
- Strategy B. Continue to support and utilize SDGFPs forest service liaison position in USFS planning processes to assure bighorn sheep habitat needs are considered.
- Strategy C. Through trap-and-transfer augment established populations that are at critically low population levels or create new populations in vacant habitat.
- Strategy D. Avoid disturbance during critically sensitive parturition and nursery periods. Parturition for ewes can occur from April 15-June 15. Nursery groups can be raising lambs in sensitive areas during May 1- August 31.

Objective 5. Continue to use science-based research, habitat inventories, and surveys to answer questions related to bighorn sheep ecology and public attitudes towards bighorn sheep management.

- Strategy A. Annually evaluate and prioritize research/survey needs for bighorn sheep. Develop research/survey proposals and seek funding opportunities.
- Strategy B. Use research/survey findings to guide bighorn sheep management where available and feasible.

Objective 6. The SDGFP will inform and educate the public on bighorn sheep ecology, management, research, and provide viewing opportunities.

- Strategy A. By March 2024, provide an electronic copy of the “South Dakota Bighorn Sheep Action Plan 2023–2027” on the department’s website. Printed copies will be available upon request.
- Strategy B. Use all available media to educate and inform the public regarding bighorn sheep status, ecology, and harvest. Work with the South Dakota Animal Industry Board and the public to discuss potential risks to bighorn sheep from domestic sheep and goats in South Dakota.
- Strategy C. Brief bighorn sheep hunters annually to provide them useful information on habits, ecology, and sound management of bighorn sheep.
- Strategy D: Promote viewability of bighorn sheep for the enjoyment of the public. Opportunities exist where tourism viewsheds such as CSP, Rapid City, and Deadwood provide the public a unique setting to observe their behavior as a quality experience.

Table 10. Implementation schedule and primary responsibility, 2023-2027.

Goals, Objectives & Strategies	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Primary Responsibility
GOAL: Goal for bighorn sheep management in South Dakota is to maximize user opportunity while maintaining populations consistent with ecological, social, aesthetic, and economic values of the people of South Dakota and our visitors.						
OBJECTIVE 1: Management and monitoring of disease pathogens in bighorn sheep herds across South Dakota.						
Strategies						
Strategy A: Continue to inventory and document domestic sheep and goats in areas adjacent to wild bighorn herds.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Staff Senior Biologists Game Survey Coordinator
Strategy B: Work with conservation organizations to develop cooperative programs to discourage domestic sheep and goat ownership in areas adjacent to wild bighorn herds.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Staff Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers
Strategy C: Continue to educate the public about bighorn sheep disease and the risk that domestic sheep and goats pose to wild sheep.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Staff Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers
Strategy D: Continue to offer assistance to owners of domestic sheep and goats in an effort to minimize the risk of disease transmission to wild sheep.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Staff Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers
Strategy E: Manage and monitor bighorn sheep disease events and attempt to mitigate losses of bighorns through disease mitigation management when feasible; implement testing and removal of bighorns that are identified as shedders of <i>M. ovi.</i> in populations that are experiencing pneumonia die-offs in an attempt to recover these populations at a faster rate.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Staff Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers
Strategy F: Through trap-and-transfer augment established populations recovering from disease events that are at critically low population levels once <i>M. ovi.</i> are no longer detected.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Staff Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers

Strategy G: Implement Department policy (Appendix 1 Management Document) for the lethal take of bighorn sheep when associated with domestic sheep or goats.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Staff Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers
OBJECTIVE 2: Monitor the status of bighorn sheep populations.						
Strategies						
Strategy A: Annually conduct surveys including ground and hunter harvest. Males will be classified during surveys according to body and horn size (Geist 1968).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers Regional Staff
Strategy B: Where feasible, conduct aerial survey and obtain abundance estimates utilizing mark-resight or other methodologies.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers Regional Staff
Strategy C: Supplement survey data with research findings when available.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers Administration
OBJECTIVE 3: Bi-annually review and set bighorn sheep management objectives; use harvest strategies to manage the population with the available resource.						
Strategies						
Strategy A: Bi-annually review bighorn harvest strategies, license allocation, and unit boundaries and develop 2-year recommendations based on available biological data, public input, and staff recommendations.		✓		✓		Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers Administration

<p>Strategy B: Generally, ram harvest will be set at 10% of the available rams in a herd (Table 2). Harvest could be above 10% of the available rams in the herd during disease events or under additional special circumstances depending upon sex and age ratios and population size. We will take into account: 1) population size and trend, 2) lamb recruitment (lamb:ewe ratios), 3) some index to the number or availability of rams in the population (ram:ewe ratios, the number of mature rams estimated or seen during surveys, average age of harvested rams), and 4) trends in hunter success or hunter effort, or both, from recent hunting seasons.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers Administration
<p>Strategy C: When feasible, use subunits and create new units to maximize hunting opportunities, distribute hunters, and minimize hunter conflicts. For the management of bighorn sheep a unit will be closed when <50 sheep are observed during surveys. A unit may get opened or reopened when 3 criteria are met: 1) ≥50 sheep are observed during surveys, 2) observed a ram:ewe ratio of ≥30 rams/100 ewes, and 3) observed a lamb:ewe ratio of ≥30 lambs/100 ewes.</p>		✓		✓		Senior Biologists Regional Program Managers Administration
<p>Strategy D: Maintain high hunter success rates (>90%) and/or high hunter satisfaction in all units.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Program Managers Administration
<p>Strategy E: Ewe harvest can be implemented depending upon guiding factors found in the decision support table (Table 3). Translocation of excess ewes should always be considered prior to the implementation of sport harvest.</p>		✓		✓		Regional Program Managers Administration
<p>OBJECTIVE 4: Maintain, manage, and protect existing bighorn sheep habitat and augment populations to maintain healthy populations in South Dakota.</p>						
<p>Strategies</p>						
<p>Strategy A: Maintain existing partnerships with the USFS, BLM, NPS, private landowners, and other state, local, and private conservation partners to support programs and practices encouraging proper bighorn sheep habitat management on public and private lands.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regional Staff Senior Biologists Game Survey Coordinator Habitat Staff USFS–SDGFP liaison

Strategy B: Continue to support and utilize SDGFP’s forest service liaison position in USFS planning processes to assure bighorn sheep habitat needs are considered.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Administration USFS–SDGFP liaison
Strategy C: Through trap-and-transfer augment established populations that are at critically low population levels or create new populations in vacant habitat.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Administration Regional Staff Senior Biologists
Strategy D: Avoid disturbance during critically sensitive parturition and nursery periods. Parturition for ewes can occur from April 15-June 15. Nursery groups can be raising lambs in sensitive areas during May 1-August 31.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Administration Regional Staff Senior Biologists
OBJECTIVE 5: Continue to use science-based research, habitat inventories, and surveys to answer questions related to bighorn sheep ecology and public attitudes towards bighorn sheep management.						
Strategies						
Strategy A: Annually evaluate and prioritize research/survey needs. Develop research/survey proposals and seek funding opportunities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Administration Regional Staff Senior Biologists
Strategy B: Use research/survey findings to guide bighorn sheep management where available and feasible.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Administration Regional Staff Senior Biologists
OBJECTIVE 6: The SDGFP will inform and educate the public on bighorn sheep ecology, management, research, and provide viewing opportunities.						
Strategies						
Strategy A: By March 2024, provide an electronic copy of the “South Dakota Bighorn Sheep Action Plan 2023–2027” on the department’s website. Printed copies will be available upon request.	✓					Communications Staff
Strategy B: Use all available media to educate and inform the public regarding bighorn sheep status, ecology, and harvest. Work with the South Dakota Animal Industry Board and the public to discuss potential risks to bighorn sheep from domestic sheep and goats in South Dakota.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Communication Staff Administration Regional Staff Senior Biologists

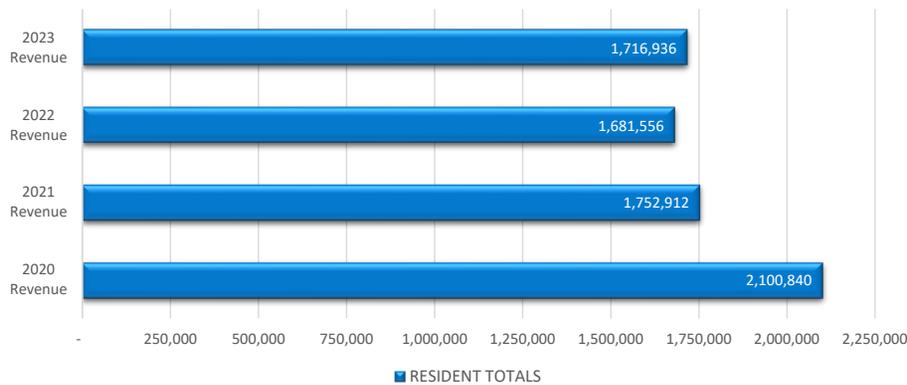
Strategy C: Brief bighorn sheep hunters annually to provide them useful information on habits, ecology, and sound management of bighorn sheep.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Wildlife Manager Regional Staff
Strategy D: Promote viewability of bighorn sheep for the enjoyment of the public. Opportunities exist where tourism viewsheds such as CSP, Rapid City, and Deadwood provide the public a unique setting to observe their behavior as a quality experience.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Wildlife Manager Regional Staff

FISHING LICENSES

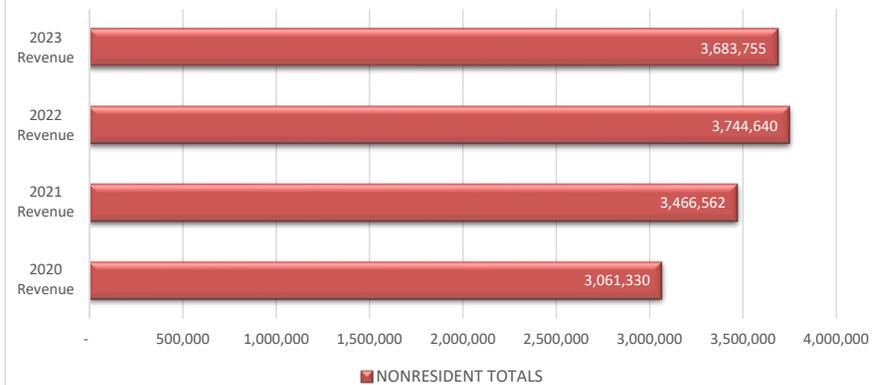
December 15 - September 30

License Type	2020	2021	2022	3-yr Avg	2023	2023 Revenue	+/- Licenses		+/- Revenue		% Change from 3 Yr Avg
							2022 vs 2023	3 Yr Avg vs 2023	2022 vs 2023	3 Yr Avg vs 2023	
1-Day Fishing	6,780	6,112	6,003	6,298	6,565	\$52,520	562	267	\$4,496	\$2,133	4%
Annual Fishing	66,888	54,949	52,580	58,139	53,524	\$1,498,672	944	(4,615)	\$26,432	(\$129,220)	-8%
Senior Fishing	14,478	13,787	13,441	13,902	13,812	\$165,744	371	(90)	\$4,452	(\$1,080)	-1%
RESIDENT TOTALS	88,146	74,848	72,024	78,339	73,901	\$1,716,936	1,877	(4,438)	\$35,380	(\$128,167)	-5.67%
1-Day Fishing	30,882	40,806	35,008	35,565	34,394	\$550,304	(614)	(1,171)	(\$9,824)	(\$18,741)	-3%
3-Day Fishing	20,429	18,521	17,612	18,854	17,543	\$649,091	(69)	(1,311)	(\$2,553)	(\$48,507)	-7%
Annual Fishing	27,035	31,767	37,804	32,202	37,080	\$2,484,360	(724)	4,878	(\$48,508)	\$326,826	15%
NONRESIDENT TOTALS	78,346	91,094	90,424	86,621	89,017	\$3,683,755	(1,407)	2,396	(\$60,885)	\$259,578	2.77%
COMBINED TOTALS	166,492	165,942	162,448	164,961	162,918	\$5,400,691	470	(2,043)	(\$25,505)	\$131,411	-1.24%

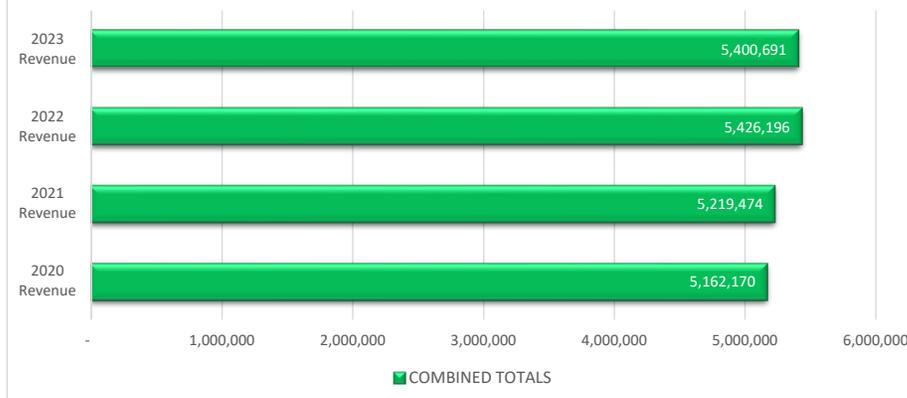
RESIDENT FISHING REVENUE COMPARISON



NONRESIDENT FISHING REVENUE COMPARISON



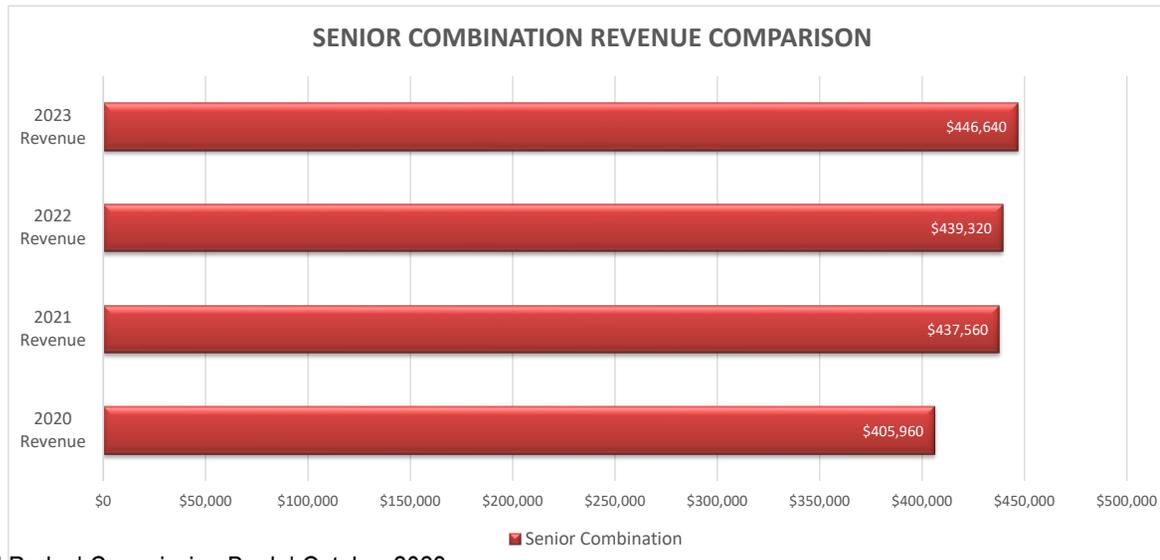
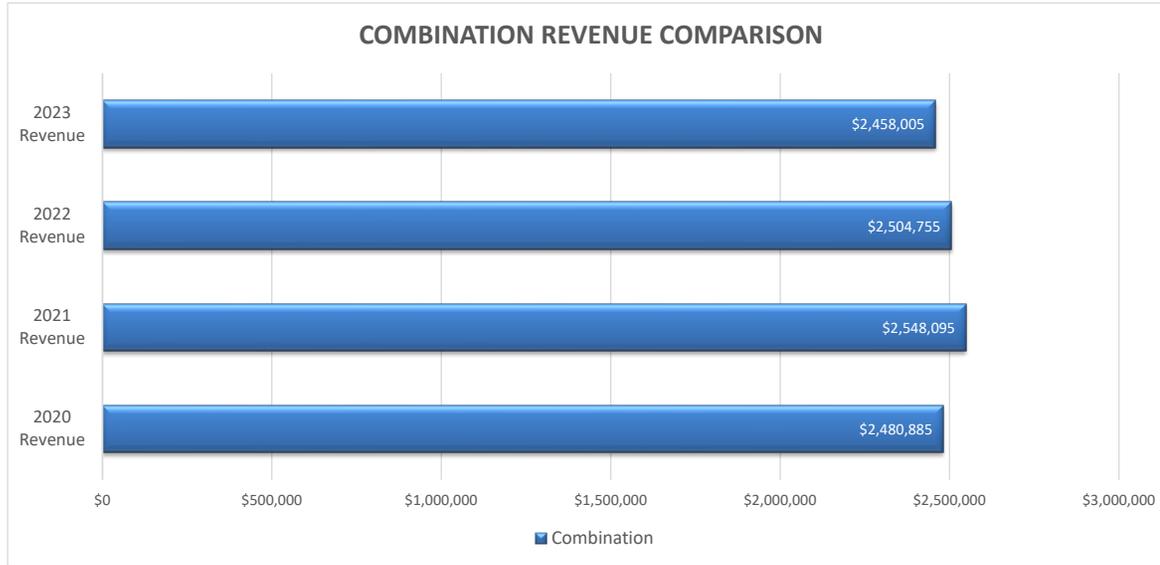
COMBINED FISHING REVENUE COMPARISON



COMBINATION LICENSES

December 15 - September 30

License Type						+/- Licenses			+/- Revenue		
	2020	2021	2022	3-yr Avg	2023	2023 Revenue	2022 vs 2023	3 Yr. Avg vs 2023	2022 vs 2023	3 Yr. Avg vs 2023	% Change from 3 Yr. Avg
Combination	45,107	46,329	45,541	45,659	44,691	\$2,458,005	(850)	(968)	(\$46,750)	(\$53,240)	-2%
Senior Combination	10,149	10,939	10,983	10,690	11,166	\$446,640	183	476	\$7,320	\$19,027	4%
Combination License Totals	55,256	57,268	56,524	56,349	55,857	\$2,904,645	(667)	(492)	(\$39,430)	(\$34,213)	-0.87%



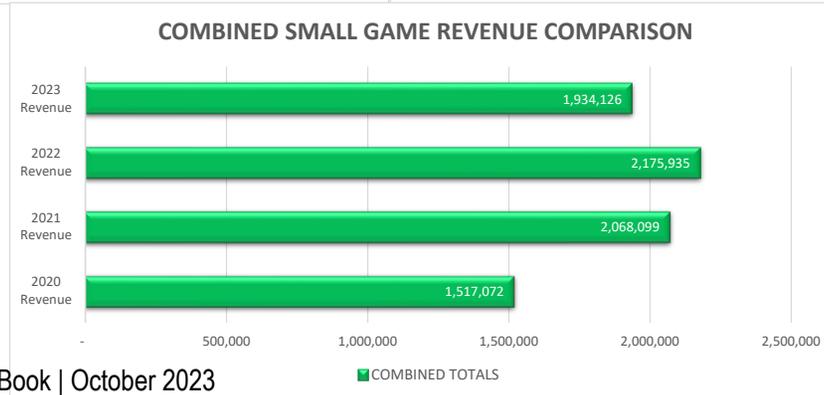
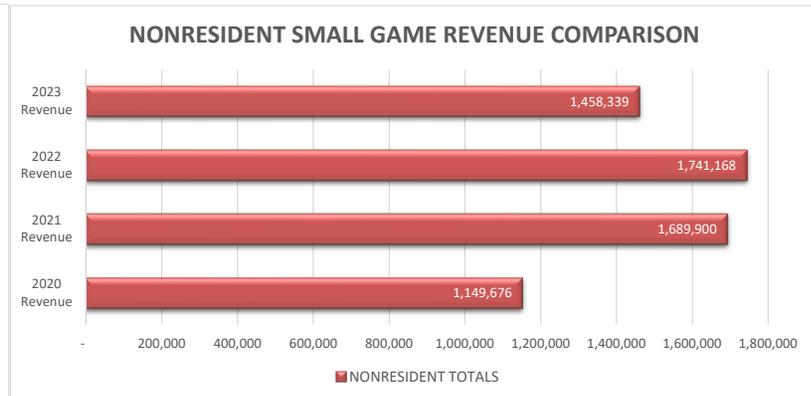
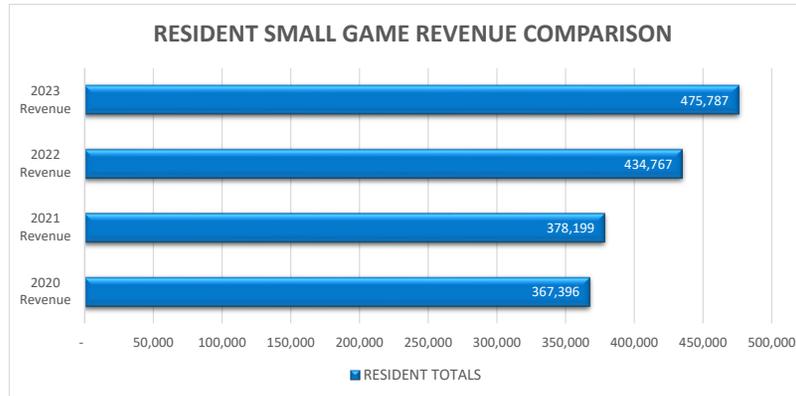
SMALL GAME LICENSES

December 15 - September 30

License Type	2020	2021	2022	3-yr Avg	2023	2023 Revenue	+/- Licenses		+/- Revenue		% Change from 3 Yr Avg
							2022 vs 2023	3 Yr Avg vs 2023	2022 vs 2023	3 Yr Avg vs 2023	
Small Game	4,423	4,224	6,332	4,993	8,002	\$264,066	1,670	3,009	\$55,110	\$99,297	60%
1-Day Small Game	291	436	213	313	133	\$1,596	(80)	(180)	(\$960)	(\$2,164)	-58%
Youth Small Game	2,122	2,515	3,470	2,702	3,355	\$16,775	(115)	653	(\$575)	\$7,832	24%
Furbearer	3,081	3,641	3,327	3,350	3,044	\$91,320	(283)	(306)	(\$8,490)	(\$9,170)	-9%
Predator/Varmint	1,368	1,165	1,807	1,447	1,656	\$8,280	(151)	209	(\$755)	\$1,047	14%
Migratory Bird Certificate: 3-Duck	0	332	1,013	n/a	1,259	\$6,295	246	n/a	\$1,230	n/a	n/a
Migratory Bird Certificate: Traditional	21,613	20,857	18,399	20,290	17,491	\$87,455	(908)	(2,799)	(\$4,540)	(\$13,993)	-14%
RESIDENT TOTALS	32,898	33,170	34,561	33,095	34,940	\$475,787	379	1,845	\$41,020	\$82,848	5.58%
Small Game	6,073	9,733	9,776	8,527	7,872	\$952,512	(1,904)	(655)	(\$230,384)	(\$79,295)	-8%
Youth Small Game	277	457	551	428	427	\$4,270	(124)	(1)	(\$1,240)	(\$13)	0%
Shooting Preserve 1-Day Nonresident	337	465	479	427	318	\$14,628	(161)	(109)	(\$7,406)	(\$5,014)	-26%
Shooting Preserve 5-Day Nonresident	2,581	3,547	4,237	3,455	3,475	\$264,100	(762)	20	(\$57,912)	\$1,520	1%
Shooting Preserve Annual Nonresident	144	190	222	185	168	\$20,328	(54)	(17)	(\$6,534)	(\$2,097)	-9%
Furbearer	7	5	3	5	2	\$550	(1)	(3)	(\$275)	(\$825)	-60%
Predator/Varmint	3,857	3,926	3,802	3,862	3,948	\$157,920	146	86	\$5,840	\$3,453	2%
Migratory Bird Certificate: 3-Duck	0	140	106	n/a	263	\$1,315	157	n/a	\$785	n/a	n/a
Migratory Bird Certificate: Traditional	1,274	2,822	2,155	2,084	5,516	\$27,580	3,361	3,432	\$16,805	\$17,162	165%
Nonresident Steptember Goose	464	465	401	443	344	\$15,136	(57)	(99)	(\$2,508)	(\$4,371)	-22%
NONRESIDENT TOTALS	15,014	21,750	21,732	19,417	22,333	\$1,458,339	601	2,916	(\$282,829)	(\$69,481)	15.02%
COMBINED TOTALS	47,912	54,920	56,293	53,042	57,273	\$1,934,126	980	4,231	(\$241,809)	\$13,368	7.98%

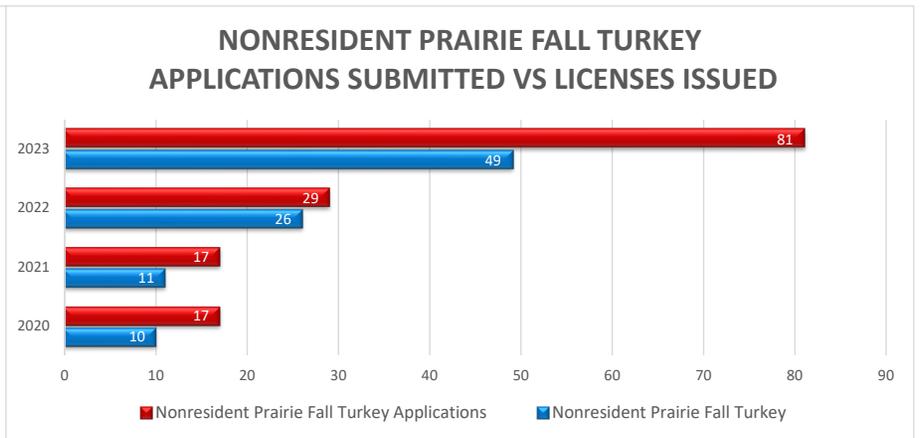
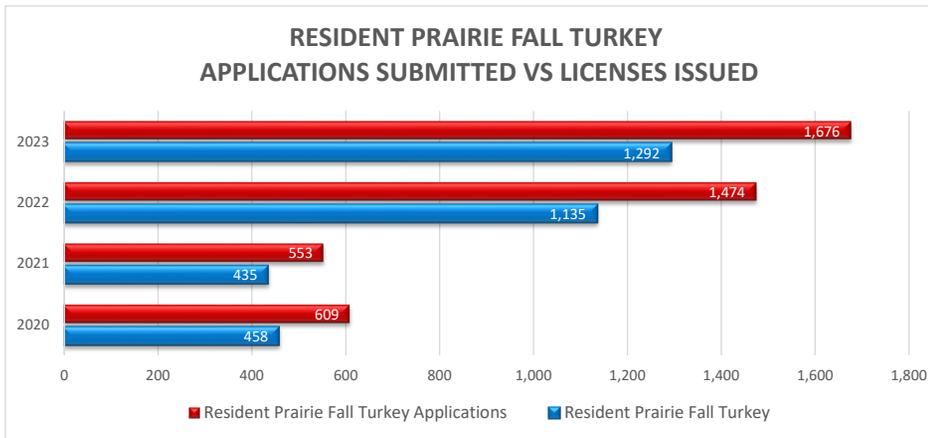
*The license year for Migratory Bird Certificates changed in 2021 so license sales are not comparable between years.

*Migratory Bird Certificates changed from 1 option to 2 in 2022



2023 BIG GAME LICENSES

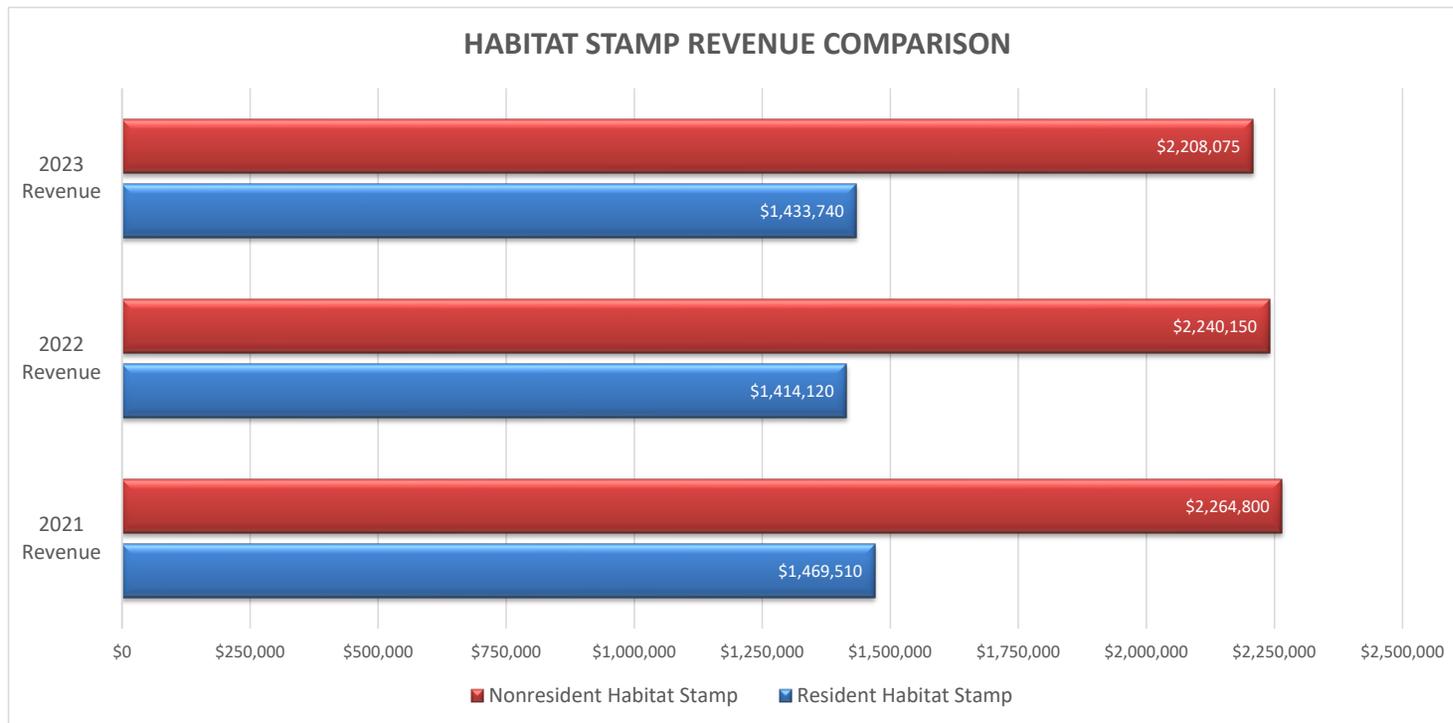
License Type	2020	2021	2022	3-yr Avg	2023	2023 Revenue	+/- Licenses		+/- Revenue		% Change from 3 Yr Avg
							2022 vs 2023	3 Yr Avg vs 2023	2022 vs 2023	3 Yr Avg vs 2023	
Resident Prairie Fall Turkey	458	435	1,135	676	1,292	\$19,500	157	616	\$2,330	\$9,195	91%
Nonresident Prairie Fall Turkey	10	11	26	16	49	\$4,430	23	33	\$2,080	\$2,997	213%
Resident Custer Trophy Bison	3	3	2	3	2	\$13,012	0	(1)	\$0	(\$4,337)	-25%
Nonresident Custer Trophy Bison	5	5	5	5	6	\$39,036	1	1	\$6,506	\$6,506	20%
Resident Custer NonTrophy Bison	7	7	9	8	11	\$35,816	2	3	\$6,512	\$10,853	43%
Nonresident Custer NonTrophy Bison	7	8	6	7	4	\$13,024	(2)	(3)	(\$6,512)	(\$9,768)	-43%
Resident Mentored Fall Turkey	271	151	194	205	320	\$1,600	126	115	\$630	\$573	56%
Nonresident Mentored Fall Turkey	n/a	1	4	n/a	7	\$70	3	n/a	\$30	n/a	n/a
Resident Mentored Deer	3,342	3,370	3,647	3,453	3,871	\$19,355	224	418	\$1,120	\$2,090	n/a
Nonresident Mentored Deer	n/a	56	98	n/a	132	\$1,320	34	n/a	\$340	n/a	n/a
Resident Mentored Antelope	817	753	472	681	496	\$2,480	24	(185)	\$120	(\$923)	n/a
Nonresident Mentored Antelope	n/a	13	16	n/a	22	\$220	6	n/a	\$60	n/a	n/a
Resident Archery Deer	24,641	25,684	24,296	24,874	24,119	\$882,900	(177)	(755)	(\$5,340)	(\$28,833)	-3%
Resident Archery Antelope	1,882	1,874	1,570	1,775	2,113	\$84,520	543	338	\$21,720	\$13,507	19%
Nonresident Archery Deer Private Only	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,459	\$417,274	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nonresident Archery Antelope Private Only	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	395	\$112,970	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1st Draw Applications Submitted											
Resident Prairie Fall Turkey Applications	609	553	1,474	879	1,676		202	797			91%
Nonresident Prairie Fall Turkey Applications	17	17	29	21	81		52	60			286%
Resident Custer Trophy Bison Applications	68	89	172	110	460		288	350			319%
Nonresident Custer Trophy Bison Applications	415	547	670	544	971		301	427			78%
Resident Custer NonTrophy Bison Applications	55	79	200	111	410		210	299			268%
NR Custer NonTrophy Bison Applications	264	387	520	390	752		232	362			93%



HABITAT STAMP

December 15 - September 30

License Type	2020	2021	2022	3-yr Avg	2023	+/- Licenses			+/- Revenue		% Change from 3 Yr. Avg
						2023 Revenue	2022 vs 2023	3 Yr. Avg vs 2023	2022 vs 2023	3 Yr. Avg vs 2023	
Resident Habitat Stamp	40,045	146,951	141,412	n/a	143,374	\$1,433,740	1,962	n/a	\$19,620	n/a	n/a
Nonresident Habitat Stamp	25,043	90,592	89,606	n/a	88,323	\$2,208,075	(1,283)	n/a	(\$32,075)	n/a	n/a
Habitat Stamp Totals	65,088	237,543	231,018	n/a	231,697	\$3,641,815	679	n/a	(\$12,455)	n/a	n/a



Public Comments

Custer State Park Airport Decommissioning

Matt Confer

Jackson WY

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please consider other alternatives rather than decommissioning such as finding cooperative partners like the Recreational Aviation Foundation that has grant money and volunteers to maintain airports such as Custer.

Recreational airports in other states have benefitted from successful public/private partnerships for preservation and maintenance.

Matt Confer

Dale Knuth

Hartford SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose closing down the Custer State Park Airport.

This airport provides access to the park for individuals that travel from a fair distance away including myself. I disagree with the analysis of the airport as I have been there many times.

Derek Samson

Menasha WI

Position: oppose

Comment:

New pilot and love Custer. Is high on my list to fly into and camp in the state park. Please do not close it.

James Densmore

Colorado Springs CO

Position: support

Comment:

We do not get up that way often but loved the airport during our visit with our Skywagon convention in 2016 I think it was. We landed some 30 Skywagons there that day. These airports are an important resource, don't give it up!

Dianne Wieman

Marion TX

Position: oppose

Comment:

The airport at Custer state park is a wonderful place to land and great way to come visit the park. I did this and had a great stay

Greg Daughtry

Boulder CO

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am a pilot from Colorado who uses the Custer state park airstrip. This is a unique and valuable state resource that is rare and should be preserved. It is also an important emergency landing strip useful for emergencies when overflying and for staging for firefighting and SAR.

Please do not close the airport.

Thomas Aex

Salida CO

Position: oppose

Comment:

Our nation is in desperate need of pilots and leaders airstrips and airplanes create both!

Bronson Macdonald

Boulder CO

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please do not close this airfield. This is a historical airfield that provides so much to the general aviation community, from locally learning how to land on shorter, gravel airfields to a place for emergency landings for planes traveling through the state.

It also provides camping under your airplane wing. There are not many airfields that allow this and is cherished through the aviation community. It allows others that can not afford to stay at a hotel a place to stay. Ride their bike to town, explore and support the surrounding natural resources.

Please keep this open because we need to continue to have the US be unique with our support of the general aviation community.

Trevor Igel

Estes Park CO

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Kathy Julien

Aptos CA

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please do not decommission this historical and wonderful little airfield.

Bruce Jennings

Belle Fourche SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

The Custer State Park airport is an important travel asset for the park. The airport provides easy access for pilots who wish to visit, and an important emergency landing area for those transiting the area. As compared to other access methods, the airport is relatively inexpensive to maintain and removes traffic from otherwise busy roadways. If runway surface maintenance is an issue, the commission should consider reverting the runway to grass.

Resources are available to assist with maintenance and improvement at the airport. Utilization would increase with better facilities. The Recreational Aircraft Foundation is an excellent resource with a proven track record to assist with maintenance and improvement.

I have personally landed at the park airport several times. GFP staff comments as to the lesser utility of a grass runway are ill informed. South Dakota pilots of a wide variety of aircraft operate off grass runways on a daily basis.

Jim Hadorn

Rapid City SD

Position: support

Comment:

I support the decommissioning of the Custer State Park airport:

1. Safety - unattended facility potential for damage to surrounding environment (fire, fuel spill or accident)
2. Monies- 2.5 to 3 million could be better allocated to other park upgrades to benefit all of the visitors and provide a richer environmental impact. The continued monies for fence upgrades and runway improvements would be constant drain on park resources.
3. Vision - what future needs does the park need to sustain its rich beauty for all visitors to enjoy, please move past the issue of a frequently used outdated airport and look towards future needs of Custer State Park.

Cathy Page

Tucson AZ

Position: oppose

Comment:

A gem that I still want to be able to access and experience. Instead of decommissioning, invite the pilots of SD and other regions to help keep it maintained. They can be of great help.

Joette Felice

Lewiston NY

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

S Salt

Boulder CO

Position: support

Comment:

PLEASE close the strip! GA flies leaded fuel on top of its noise disruption. I am so proud of SD for moving this direction. Camping and hiking will also monumentally improve. We don't go to remote places to hear an aviation amusement park.

Donna Urban

Centennial CO

Position: support

Comment:

Planes flying in to an area where hunters and fishermen are?! No way. These planes need to STAY AWAY from places like this!

Gary Keller

The Villages FL

Position: support

Comment:

A taxpayer driven airstrip to keep open for a few of the 1/4 of 1% group known as pilots. Stop this lead and noise polluting group from their continued destruction of parks with their damaging hobby at the expense of to rest of us.

Dean Hendrickson

Lake George CO

Position: oppose

Comment:

Why would anyone try to close a perfectly good airport that so many people enjoy using and camping at?

Robert Duncan

Custer SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Having been in aviation for over 40 years I strongly recommend against any airport closing. Instead of closing you should be promoting it as another opportunity to enjoy Custer State Park. You could start by removing the roofless hangar, installing aircraft parking and tie down area. Install a nice restroom or vault toilet, have a direct line to the State Game Lodge. Pilots and passengers would surely pay for a ride to have breakfast, lunch or dinner. Pilots are notoriously good tippers so maybe a Safari Jeep could be used for transportation. There are endless ways to get this airport better utilized. One thing is for sure if you let this airport go, you will never have another chance to replace it. In this day and age nothing gets accomplished that doesn't draw a bunch of criticism. If a fire should occur in the vicinity, you will thank your lucky stars you still have this airport.

Terry Hinn

Hot Springs SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

It would be a travesty to close that airport, just out of curiosity, how do you know what the transit traffic is if no one mans it?? I use it probably 8-10 times a year meeting family and friends on the wild life loop, and use it as a friend lives near-by. Gov Noem talks of the HUGE surplus she has created, funding should of came for this a long, long time ago before it got to the condition it is in now. and I do believe the local volunteer fire service used it to refill the single engine tankers during the CSP fire a couple years ago.

Duane Kraft

Timber Lake SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please do not close this airport. I have numerous aircraft registered in the state. With a little work the Custer state airport could be a gem for tourism for the beautiful Black Hills.

Jeffrey Russell

Waunakee WI

Position: oppose

Comment:

I strongly oppose closing the Custer State Park Airport. Reports of the poor runway condition are greatly overstated. Just this last weekend, participants from fly-in held in Hot Springs flew to the airport and marveled at the beauty of the area. All commented that the runway condition was completely fine. In the future, if and when the runway may degrade, it would be possible to grind up the existing asphalt and create a gravel runway.

The Custer State Park airport represents a fantastic recreational destination and provides access to many recreational activities within the park. Closing this airport would not be in the best public interest.

Christopher Lang

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

This airport is a valuable asset to the airmen of SD. I believe it is necessary for Park utilization by airmen of all the surrounding states. It is a necessary alternate to the glider pilots of the Black Hills Soaring Club. I am one of those pilots. When traversing the Black Hills westbound in glider cross country flights, it is important to have airports as alternate /emergency landable options if winds and weather become an issue during glider cross country flights. The same can be said of Hot Air balloons and their pilots in this state. Thank you for your attention to my concerns.

Michael Marshall

Greeley CO

Position: oppose

Comment:

These airports are both historical and functional! Stop screwing up our historical aviation icons!

Patrick Hiles

Belle Fourche SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I've been utilizing the CSP airport for over 18 years. In the national guard we use this airport almost daily to train with our Black Hawk helicopters ensuring we are always mission ready. The types of training we do there are not feasible at the busier local airports and the amount of noise complaints would increase dramatically if CSP were to be decommissioned. In my off time, I've spent many nights under the wing of my Cessna 170 camping with my two children. Recreational aviation is growing rapidly and this is one of the only airports available in the Black Hills that supports that kind of flying. The article I read said that it is rarely utilized, but I've seen many small aircraft camping at the airport but without a sign in sheet, there is no real way to track usage. Decommissioning this airport would have a detrimental impact on the National Guard training, local general aviation, and would no longer draw pilots from outside our area looking for a place to fly-in camp.

Barry Sullivan

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

This field is one of the most used airports for training of military and recreational flyers in the black hills. It is also extremely useful for EMS use in that area when needed in an emergency.

Jim Hayward

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Several members in our EAA Chapter 39 have used this airport over the past several decades. It makes a great practice area for pilots desiring to practice pattern work without bothering Rapid City Regional with the practice. The shorter area also allows quicker pattern work and when the winds are up it's a great location for crosswind pattern practice. I personally have used it quite often and have seen radio control aircraft folks utilizing the parking area for their planes. The last time I was there a few months ago, the runway didn't seem to be that bad and is better than a lot of rural fields in the state.

Morgan Post

Council Bluffs IA

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the decommissioning of the Custer State Park airport. The airport provides a unique opportunity to directly access a beautiful area. Airplane camping is a growing segment of the flying community that would utilize the airport without upgrades. I believe the state should explore other options, such as converting the runway to grass, before deciding to close the airport. Nonprofit organizations such as the Recreational Aviation Foundation use volunteers to rehabilitate and preserve airstrips for future generations to use. The closure of the Custer State Park airport would be a major loss to the aviation community and should be prevented.

Matthew Retka

West Fargo ND

Position: oppose

Comment:

I remember flying into this airport and camping with dad as a kid. What a great way to explore Custer State Park it was.

I can appreciate the potential burden to the Commission to keep it open, but encourage you to explore cooperative alternatives to preserve this recreational asset. For example, the Recreational Aviation Foundation has grant money and volunteers for projects that qualify. I wish my home state of ND had more places like this.

Edward Decastro

Laramie WY

Position: support

Comment:

As recreational aviation continues to grow, airports in back country and suburban areas become more valuable. I am confident that organizations such as the RAF will provide valuable support if allowed so as to keep this airport open. Please explore possible cooperative efforts with the RAF in order to keep the Custer airport. Thank you for your efforts to do so.

Dave Tunge

Yankton SD

Position: support

Comment:

Custer State Park is unique in that it has an airport. Few parks do. It provides camping within walking distance to facilities yet offers a degree of remoteness for those who want to camp away from the crowds. It also provides a back up airport for Custer. Let's give this decision some time.....visit with the Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF) regarding options available. The park has this unique attraction we should not lose.

Kristi Dunks

Bozeman MT

Position: oppose

Comment:

I wish to go on record as supporting the preservation of Custer State Park Airport, 3V0. Recreational aviation is a large and important segment of the general aviation industry and airports such as Custer State Park Airport are a critical part of recreational aviation operations. With a 4,000-foot long runway, this airport also serves as an important landing option for aircraft operating in South Dakota. I understand the work and funding that it takes to maintain this type of airport, but many states have looked toward public and private partnerships to maintain the airport partnering with groups such as the Recreational Aviation Foundation. Custer State Park Airport provides dispersed access to the park, and reduces congestion at nearby Custer County Airport, while remaining feasible for firefighting, search and rescue, and life-flight missions. Airports like Custer State Park provide valuable transportation infrastructure to the west and I hope that you will explore alternative options before closing the airport. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Bryce Dibbern

Interior SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please keep this airport operational! It is my family's favorite place to fly and camp!

Darrel W Sauder

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Used by a variety of aircraft as recreational opportunity. If cost of maintenance is a problem.. remove asphalt and make it a grass strip. RAF volunteers will contribute to maintenance and grants to keep it open.

Michael Perkins

Bigfork MT

Position: oppose

Comment:

Consider alternatives to the decommissioning of Custer State Park Airport. There are many alternatives for funding. The airport offers a trailhead for recreational enthusiasts and is unique in South Dakota. In addition, it can be used as a forward operating base for fire fighting operations and training for military.

Robert Guilfoyle

Shepherd MT

Position: oppose

Comment:

WE LOVE SOUTH DAKOTA !

My wife and I always look forward with excited anticipation to our flights to Custer State Park that we try to make every late Spring and early-mid Fall . We are older folks that can't tolerate long automobile trips due to our working class spinal arthritis. Flying cuts many of our road trips almost in half .

We have often said to each other that if we were to ever leave our home state of Montana , our ONLY choice would be South Dakota .

We would be heartbroken if we could no longer fly into CSP . I can confidently say that there are many others from MT , WY , SD , NB that we have visited with during our flights to CSP that would feel likewise .

Randy Van Winkle

Van Buren MO

Position: support

Comment:

I urge the Commission to please explore any and all avenues to keep this airport open. This is a true asset for everyone, not only aviation enthusiasts, but the service it provides for fire fighting activities and safety options for general public emergencies . Please keep this airport open at all costs because if lost we all lose much more than just a 4,000' strip of land. Please continue to keep South Dakota great !

Craig Baumiller

Piedmont SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

This airport could be used as a recreation area with camping. Come fly in and tent in the most beautiful place on earth Custer state park. This airport could be utilized for so many missions. Please consider keeping it and making it a fly in destination. Thank you Craig

David Utter

Piedmont SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

This airport is one of my favorite places. It provides recreational opportunities to many. We should keep it open.

Shashi Kanth

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

This is a great training resource PLUS a great emergency landing option in the terrain surrounding. An absolute gem of a back country airport. Encourage general aviation flying, with advertising, for local sight seeing by air, host local fly ins and young eagle events, pretty soon it will blossom into a thriving economic opportunity. Please don't shut this down.

Colleen Venner

Hot Springs SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

My husband and I own and manage a private chartered airport, Black Hills Flyway SD27, 7 miles south of Hot Springs. We created an airpark and had all lots sold within 90 days by word of mouth. Two of us have completed our build, and five are in the process.

We just took part in an annual flyin where 89 planes were hosted at the Hot Springs airport for four days and tent camped. We hosted an ice cream social at our airport, and 35 planes attended.

We would be happy to visit at length about the possibilities of the airport at Custer State Park. We believe it should grow, not close. We believe with the right management this could help both tourism and aviation in the state. Please see provided photo of our social fly in.

Carmine Mowbray

Polson MT

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please consider the Recreational Aviation Foundation resources in your consideration of this valuable recreational asset. The RAF provides grants and experienced volunteers that work under the direction of Land Managers to preserve places like this.

Please consider allowing the airfield to return to turf, thus saving the expense of asphalt maintenance. Your state recreational use statute protects the Fish and Game Commission, as well.

Thank you for doing all you can to preserve this asset for public use.

Bob Fischer

Hot Sorings SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

The airport should remain in the park

Roland Keranen

Spearfish SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

1. For lower-cost and ease of maintenance, turn it into a turf runway. 2. Provide campsites and shelters (much like a state park, maybe not as extensive) to enable camping by pilots and their companions 3. Enable some sort of transportation options to area towns 4. This would build on the Black Hills' attraction as a tourist destination 5. Turf runway makes it accessible to most general aviation aircraft, so the potential users are many 6. Promote it on South Dakota travel sites as well as aviation magazines. Thanks!

Dennis Knuckles

Custer SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I wish to go on record for saving Custer State Park Airport, 3V0. As a local 20 year SD pilot who is based out of the Custer County Airport I have used 3V0 for recreational access to the park numerous times and on several occasions used it as a safety option when the weather or NW winds make landing at Custer (KCUT) impossible. I can't emphasize the importance of having this airstrip as a safety option when flying in the Black Hills for all pilots flying in the area. Recreational aviation is a growing in numbers and CSP could with a few primitive or cabin facilities provide for the enjoyment of this segment of its users: whether paved or turf. I've personally walked the length of the airstrip within the last two weeks and fall to see the "dire" state of required repairs articulated in SDGP statement for decommissioning it.

I understand the desire for the park to get rid of this public resource since it apparently has no use for it presently, however this goes beyond the park's need. I encourage you to explore cooperative alternatives to preserve this recreational asset. For example, the Recreational Aviation Foundation has grant money and volunteers for projects that qualify.

Recreational airports in other states have benefitted from successful public/private partnerships for preservation and maintenance. I personally would be willing to donate my time and money to assist in this endeavor. As a past member of the Civil Air Patrol we routinely used 3V0 for search and rescue options/training, as does the National Guard. Keeping CSP airstrip operational also keeps a much needed asset feasible for firefighting, S&R, and life-flight missions. Time is of the essence in these situations, flying from distance sources steals that time that could be spent saving lives or resources . Please reconsider keeping this airport open.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dennis Knuckles

James Grainger

Sheridan WY

Position: support

Comment:

Good afternoon,

I am writing you today to voice opposition for decommissioning Custer State Park airport.

We enjoy visiting the airport often with flying peers (photos attached) for group events, picnics or close access to State Park.

As we have witnessed elsewhere, once you close an airport. It is gone forever. We are happy to get involved to help keep the airport open and available to the Public!

Get those wheels up...>J.T.

Steve Behrends

Livingston TX

Position: oppose

Comment:

Once the airport is gone, it's gone. Please keep the airport open. It could be needed in the future and it's easier to keep it now than to rebuild later.

Look at what happened to this country's railway system. They got rid of all the secondary rail lines. Cars and trucks right? Well, think about how easy it would be to move stuff by rail NOW, if we still had some tracks to run trains on. You never know what the future brings, keep the airport!

Ben Klaas

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I recently received my Private Pilot license and it is unfortunate to hear there is consideration of removing an amazing back country field... Please keep it and use as a tool to draw more people into our area . I know it is on my list of places to go , and hope I still get the opportunity.

Martin Wallace

Broomfield CO

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Lacey Utter

Billings SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

PLEASE do not decommission this airport!! General aviation relies on these small strips, especially out here in the west where options to land can be few and far between. Safe places to go are vital for normal flying operations and offer opportunities not just for a place to land but also to support local communities.

Mark Fiegen

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Craig Johnson

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the decommissioning of the CSP airport. I'm a flight instructor and the airport is very important for training flight students. I use it for short cross country flights from Rapid City. It is also a challenging airport to land at for students. Also for making steep approaches and other principles of mountain flying. Also for short field landings and takeoffs. It's also a valuable airport if you need to make an emergency landing while crossing the Black Hills. Not to mention the scenic qualities of the field and its proximity to the Game Lodge campground, the visitors center, lodging and hiking. Very few state or national parks have airports available for public use. The CSP airport is a real gem. I hope we don't lose it. Thank you.

Patrick Wellnitz

Whitewater WI

Position: oppose

Comment:

Access to the airport is limited as the fence/ gate is locked. I've planned flying in and meeting people there but with a locked gate, it's not workable.

David Shiffer

Woodstock OH

Position: other

Comment:

I flew from Ohio to Custer State Park to camp at the airport. This was with my two teenage daughters. It was a great experience and we all loved it. I urge South Dakota to keep the airport open. Services are non-existent at the airport. I think the airport could generate more use if it was promoted to the flying public and/or there was a way to get around the park. I hope you would consider it as a gateway to the park. You should consider a bison watching building near the airport that serves meals. That would get pilots (and the general public) there eating meals and possibly camping overnight. We love traveling through South Dakota by airplane, the airports are all a state treasure!

Gerald Rieber

Watertown SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Would like to see this repurposed to a fly in back country destination for general aviation. Convert to/Maintain grass strip for GA activity to include primitive a country style airplane camping in the park. The Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF) may have resources to contribute. It would be a shame to lose this, or any strip, but I understand the cost of maintaining a paved hard surface runway. Please consider repurposing to maintain and encourage general aviation access to Custer State Park.

Arthur Howard

Lake City MN

Position: oppose

Comment:

It would be nice to convert this to a grass strip. Grass takes much less maintenance.

Erik Forman

Brandon SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Last Year I flew to the airport for the first time with my girlfriend. I parked it there while we used the nearby trail to go on a hike. It also allows a brief opportunity to see the wildlife while flying in the approach. I was going to go again this year while I took my annual trip out to the hills with my father, however the National Guard was utilizing the space for training and I was unsure if any of that was closed off. So I missed the opportunity to take him there.

Yes I agree that this airfield doesn't get utilized often. However, I believe that is because it really isn't advertised anywhere. It is a hidden gem that many people from outside the state just don't know about. Every time I fly to Custer County Airport I meet a lot of people that aren't from South Dakota. Many of them are coming through here for the first time visiting the Black Hills. Yes this airport doesn't replace Custer County Airport since it has facilities, however it does provide an opportunity to be completely away from the "city". Perhaps if the state looks at what other states are doing in similar outdoors locations (Johnson Creek Idaho as an example) and perhaps this location can be turned around to make it a premier landing site. It doesn't have to be a paved runway. Perhaps converting it to grass would be more feasible. I believe with a small investment and a targeted audience with the aviation community it could be a win win with tourism growth.

David Christy

Parsons KS

Position: oppose

Comment:

Any small airport that has evidence of lower traffic count become victims of closure. These airports need stronger FAA support to improve the airport services that will encourage appeal and growth. Do not close small airports. I am the airport manager of the Parsons Tri-City airport. And have been a pilot for over 44 years and have seen the intentional neglect of these airports. Build them up to better service GA, not tear them down.

Kyle Lewis

Frederick MD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Jeffrey Russell

Waunakee WI

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Brenden Hendrickson

Custer SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

This letter is in support of keeping Custer State Park (3V0) Airport open.

I am the airport manager for Custer County Airport (CUT) and I am expressing the concerns of the pilots who frequent this area.

If the weather is bad in Custer, the pilots will land at Custer State Park.

If the crosswinds are too strong, they will divert and land at 3VO. 3VO is used as an emergency landing airport for planning single engine flights into Custer. If an engine failure occurs. They can turn around and return to 3VO. Once they are on the west side of Mt. Coolidge they can glide into CUT. Without 3VO the pilots will be making a crash landing off airport.

3VO is used for training flights and recurrent training flights.

Custer County Airport is a challenging airport due to density altitude and variable crosswinds, so most training is done somewhere else, usually 3V0 because of safety concerns. Please do not close 3VO

Respectfully,
Brenden Hendrickson
Custer County Airport Manager

Larry Vrooman

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

1) It makes more sense to keep the airport but reduce maintenance costs. Ideally the asphalt could be removed and the existing runway planted to grass and then maintained as a turf runway.

2) A more austere approach would be to close the asphalt runway (yellow Xs painted on the approach ends) and mark out a grass runway along side the closed runway using yellow cones to identify the ends.

3) The number of aircraft using the runway was no doubt substantially higher than 50 in 2022. Many land but don't stop shut down, and many (if not most) of the pilots who stop don't sign a register. Many airports have registers where the last entry may be months props despite daily flight operations.

Mathieu Labs

Greenville WI

Position: support

Comment:

Please keep this airport open. Was planning to fly there in 2024.

David Mosdal

Broadview MT

Position: oppose

Comment:

This airport could be used/developed as a stop over point for midwestern back country pilots on their way to or from more popular locations in the mountains of western Montana and Idaho. It could also be a weekend destination of it's own in conjunction with other Dakota Badlands strips or National Grasslands strips in North Dakota.

Devon Christner

Grand Rapids MI

Position: oppose

Comment:

it's a great airport to visit, it shouldn't be removed.

South Dakota Wildlife Federation
South Dakota Wildlife Federation

Pierre SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Elijah Seymour

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the decommissioning of the Custer airport. I agree with the AOPA that the runway should be reconstructed as turf. This would be an attractive flying destination for many general aviation enthusiasts and a great investment in our beautiful state of South Dakota.

Joel De Groot

Chester SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

The Custer Park airport is in a perfect position to capitalize on the back-country flying craze that has been going on aviation the past decade. AOPA's proposal to partner with the Recreational Aircraft Foundation (RAF) for grants and upkeep of a turf runway with camping spots is a great way to expand the use of Custer State to back-country aviators.

Steven Wright

Odessa FL

Position: oppose

Comment:

My family visited the Custer State Park, the Badlands, Mount Rushmore, the Crazy Horse Monument and other areas decades ago. I recently retired and have returned to GA flying. It is a dera to return to the area flying my airplane. I dearly hope the airport remains in operation.

Joe Baker

Sturgis SD

Position: support

Comment:

The Custer state park airport is a great airport. It's really the only good airplane for pilots to camp at. A closure of the airport would be detrimental to the aviation community. With help form volunteers like the RAF (Recreational Aviation Foundation) we could greatly improve the airport for future generations. Little things like adding some trees, picnic tables, and maybe a horseshoe pit. Would be inviting to many people.

Lawrence Schufeldt

North Platte NE

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please do not close your airport. My wife and I have flown into it several times and have thoroughly loved the experience and park. We fly to Rapid City often for recreational and business purposes and that is an airport that I plan on alternative emergency strip. It is so unique that I would believe it would never be duplicated. We have used it to eat at the park and camp. It's a great recreational spot for aviation. Thank you , Lawrence and Jeannie Schufeldt

Noah Pruzek

Hudson WI

Position: oppose

Comment:

As a pilot and past user of the Custer State Park airport (multiple times) for a camping trip to your great state park, I would challenge leadership to re-think your plan to decommission and instead lean into the airport in a different way. Convert the runway to grass, remove the old buildings, and engage with pro-Recreational Aviation organizations like theRAF.org, AOPA, and local EAA chapters. I can personally say that the experience of camping next to roaming buffalo is a uniquely American experience and one that I feel very blessed to have experienced. The future of this airport can be very bright given the opportunity. It could very easily turn into a flagship destination just like these: <https://theraf.org/ryan-field/>, <https://theraf.org/featured-airstrip-trigger-gap-ar/>.

Ryan Kerce

Revere MA

Position: oppose

Comment:

Please do not close Custer Airport and consider turning it into a turf field! It could become a backcountry flying magnet given its proximity to the parks nearby, and offer great aerial views of the surrounding area. Please save the airport!

Free Park Entrance and Fishing

Kerry Stiner

Burke SD

Position: support

Comment:

I strongly support the elimination of Mothers and Fathers Day free fishing weekends.

Brenda Pusakrich

Hot Springs SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Nancy Hilding

Black Hawk SD

Position: other

Comment:

I suggest that the Commission add Native American Day as a free day at Parks (with fishing) for all. That the State of SD and Game, Fish & Parks exists is because of the wars against tribes & associated genocide, ethnic cleansing & broken treaties. One of the treaties secured hunting rights for tribes in western SD.

SDFGP Parks should have at least one day to celebrate Native American culture & their knowledge of SD's biodiversity & geography. This day(s) should offer free admission to all & various Parks could sponsor programs on Native American culture, history & knowledge of nature..

Hunt for Habitat

Don Harrison

Woodstock GA

Position: other

Comment:

Your new website is amazingly confusing when all you want to do is to buy a non-resident hunting license!!!!
:https://license.gooutdoorssouthdakota.com/Licensing/CustomerLookup.aspx

When you arrive at the site, you see a female hunter and "Click Here For Information On License" in large font located right in the center of the screen. The correct spot to purchase a license is a tiny little box on the LEFT of the screen. It should be just the opposite.
Please make a LARGE click that says BUY A SD LICENSE HERE!!!!. Information on licenses should be a sub-click of Purchase a License.

I have hunted in SD for 23 years and never had a problem buying a license until I encountered this new website. Suggest you get someone who does not work for your web site construction company to look in to todays site and try to buy a license. VERY CONFUSING.
I hope that you will pass this constructive criticism on to the web site producer.

Thank you, Don Harrison

Kim Tysdal

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I strongly oppose the use of dogs in hunting raccoons, or any other wildlife.

Mountain Lion Season - Expanded Use of Hounds

Dana Rogers

Hill City SD

Position: support

Comment:

I support the expanded use of hounds in pursuit of Mt Lions in the BHNF. I'd like to see the petition crafted differently through GFP staff though. Perhaps a 20% of the total quota and a start date about March 1st. To allow the hard charging boot trackers plenty of time to keep pursuing their opportunities. We need more Lions taken to help reduce predation on our BH Big Game populations.

Kim Gennaro

Hubbard OH

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Cody Johnson

Belle Fourche SD

Position: support

Comment:

As a rancher and a hunter in the black hills I support the use of hounds in the black hills. The use of hounds is the most effective and ethical way to control and manage a population of mountain lions. In the Wyoming black hills they use hounds and they and don't have issues, they do however kill much more mature lions. The use of hounds enables hunters to selectively kill the necessary lions to grow a population. Houndsmen are the single greatest tool a department can use to keep population numbers within the desired number.

Jeremy Wells

Sturgis SD

Position: support

Comment:

I strongly support the use of hounds in the black hills for the better management of a very healthy lion population. The opportunities this would open up for all hunters way beyond just lion hunting. One lion will kill an average of a deer every 7 days! That's 52 deer a year ! We have a declining elk deer and especially Mt goat population. We need hounds as its been a very productive tool in Custer state park!

Leisa Bailey

Vermillion SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Brennan Welbig

Montrose SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the use of Mt. Lion hunting with use of hounds in the Hill with current information around the proposal and population data from the state.

If lion population numbers are in the desired/targeted range, then logically there is no NEED for another method of hunting them. This is to say, the current method is achieving the target population. Again, that is assuming the data is accurate. It seems there are too many potential variables which may come into play and cannot be easily predicted if the use of hounds is allowed (as currently proposed)—private land conflicts, commercialization (guiding), inexperienced houndsmen (or any Joe Smith taking their dog out), conflicts with boot hunters (such as pursuing the same lion), treeing for sport/practice (or not harvesting lion when treed), and possibly more. I believe with really knowing what may happen if this goes through, we are taking a huge risk just to satisfy the WANT of a small group. The risk outweighs the reward. I understand the want for houndsmen to have the ability to run their dogs in the Hills. However, I may want to hunt deer with a crossbow. I may want to hunt lions in November. But you are not going to satisfy everyone, and that's a fact. You allow 12 lions this year, next year some will want 18. Next year, nonresidents will want in. The fact is that there is no need for it at this point in time, according to the data.

Now, if that data may not be completely accurate or lion harvest limits are going down, then it may be time to start talking about using hounds to assist. Obviously, there would need to be regulations around it. Here are just a few ideas which have been brought up in other discussions:

- Use of hounds allowed if certain number of harvested lions not reached by April (40-50?). I think a specific season date for hounds would be best so it's not a free for all throughout the whole season.
- Requirement to harvest treed lion if harvest limit allows (certain number of males and females)
- Report to state if you will be hunting with hounds and any applicable info (year's experience, dog breed, any other qualifications)
- Not able to pursue lion if boot tracks also found
- Residents only

If a hound season is passed, it needs to start off on its own season dates and not throughout the entire season, at least starting off. I think there are too many uncontrollables at this point. That way, we can see how the first run goes and discuss from there. It is much easier to give than it is to take away (see new deer tag system – haha).

With all that said, I strongly oppose a Mt. Lion hound season in the Hills only to satisfy a few, especially when current data says populations could potentially fall outside of the target range if harvest limits are reached each year. I do not oppose hunting lions with hounds in general. I think it is great for people who choose to do so. I just think the opportunity to hunt lions on foot in the Hills is very unique and special, along with the hunters who do it—something I think no other state with similar habitats can claim. I'd hate to see it fall apart for no factual reasons.

Brian Hansen

Bath SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Seth Mulvehill

Piedmont SD

Position: support

Comment:

As I've stated before, a more precise and efficient tool to potentially be used to aid in rebounding our falling big game numbers seems like a no-brainer. And the small tag allotment will have little to no intrusion on current "boot" hunting enthusiasts, myself included.

Sam Huffman

Belle Fourche SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Jon Peterson

Belle Fourche SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Sarah Johnson

Belle Fourche SD

Position: support

Comment:

I support mountain lion hunting with hounds in the black hills. Selective hunting is far more ethical than the current style of lion hunting in the black hills. The "boot hunters" kill young lions and a massive majority of them are females. Often spotted lions under 50 lbs are killed by these boot hunters. Let's put a stop to the killing of small, young lions and let's manage our population ethically and humanely, with hounds.

Penny Schneeman

Gillette WY

Position: support

Comment:

Mountain Lions can be very dangerous. Hunting with hounds evens the odds of a successful hunt.

Norman Burleson

Lead SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Hello, there are a lot of my friends and I that are strongly against hunting lions with dogs outside of Custer State Park in the Black Hills fire protection district. They will dominate the hunting of them. We will no longer purchase tags if it goes through. Thank You, Norm Burleson.

Casey Hislop

Sturgis SD

Position: support

Comment:

The only proper way to harvest a lion , bobcat or bear is to tree them with hounds so you can properly identify the sex of the game treed. This has worked in many other states who have found this is the proper way to identify sex of animal who may get harvested. GFP uses hounds and has houndsmen on the payroll that do this very same thing the rest of the public also should have the same rights as South Dakota Tax Paying Residents. Properly manage a population with the use of dogs and do away with modern firearm season (Boot hunters tend to shoot the first cat or bear they see, especially if it's there first). This will eliminate the harvesting of small young wildlife. I am 100% for the use of Hounds throughout the prairie and hills of South Dakota.

Paul Sand

Rosholt SD

Position: support

Comment:

I support the use of hounds for hunting mountain lions. I have no problem with the ethics of using dogs in this manner. It is a very good way of assessing where the overall population of mountain lions is at.

Nonresident One-Day Fishing License

Kerry Stiner

Burke SD

Position: support

Comment:

I strongly support elimination of the one day fishing license as well as elimination of the free Mothers and Fathers day fishing weekends. We use North Point often and I think there are more out of state vehicles than SD vehicles. I also see them bring their \$90,000 boats and \$100,000 pickups so I don't think a few extra dollars for licenses is going to affect anybody.

Todd Martell

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

A one-day fishing license for friends and family that may not be dedicated fisherman is a necessity, \$62 for one day of fishing with a three day license and habitat fee will cause people to not participate, a slight increase in the cost of a one day license would be more appropriate.

Dennis Block

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

The one-day non-resident proposal is, in my opinions, asinine! Who in their right mind would purchase a 3 day license for \$62!?! I fished in Wisconsin a couple of weeks ago, and purchased an ANNUAL Wisconsin license for roughly \$28! I'm very hsrd-pressed to believe that the GGP will have a positive impact of \$500,000 - 1.3 million! Who's kidding who here?! This sounds like Iowa who set up cameras on I-29 to photograph speeders, to help pay for their road construction! If I was a non-resident, I wouldn't come to S.D. to fish! Did any "dound-minded" legislators check surrounding States to compare licese fees for non-residents?

Apparently, legislators didn't figure in the cost of not only a license, but cost of gas, boat rental, motel/hotel fees, food, entertainment, purchase of fishing gear/essentials, etc.!! This is purely for economic means, not for a non-resident to bring himself or family to enjoy the great things this State has to offer! Wonder what/who resort/motel/hotel owners will blame when their business income falls short of their expectations....and hopes!

David Hempel

Webster SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

My family all lives out of state and come back to fish two weekends a year (Fathers Day & Labor Day). This involves 8 individuals who fish one day each of the weekends. It is like none of them will purchase a \$62 license each time the fish for one day so this essentially eliminates a family tradition that we have enjoyed for the past 10 years. I purchase an annual resident fishing license every year, but find myself now reconsidering whether I want to even do continue doing that since this change would penalize my family to that extent. My lids do not pull in with \$40,000 boats & \$60,000 pickups. They are simple "bobber" fisher people who are fishing for the relaxation of the family time together. I hope you reconsider this move.

Sincerely,

David Hempel

Paul Johnson

Webster SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

We have a large number of fishermen that come only once a year and prefer the one day licensing option. This could also deter new fishermen giving the sport a try because of too large of an investment. The revenue created for us with the sale of one day licenses helps to off set the minimal amount we collect on the annual license which is used up credit card charges. We do understand the need for the habitat stamp revenue, but taking away options for sportsmen will not create good public relations, most of which your licensing agents absorb and defend.

Paul and Karen Johnson

Lynn Lake Lodge

Justin Allen

Pierre SD

Position: support

Comment:

I support eliminating the one day non resident fishing license. I also support getting rid of the two-one day free fishing days. If NRs want to enjoy SD resources they should fund the programs thru licenses fee like everyone else.

Dave Spaid

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose getting rid of the one day fishing license. Both residents, family living out of state and non-residents will suffer the new cost for just 1 day of fishing for \$74.

Brandon Brake

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the proposal to restrict out of state fishing licenses to a minimum of three days. Learning and working on R3, would defeat part of the mission of South Dakota Game Fish and Parks. You would create a barrier due to cost for many customers, who come to fish in South Dakota for one and two days. It would also turn off many customers who do come to South Dakota by raising fees and reduce business opportunities and tax revenue as a whole in South Dakota.

Zachery Warren

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

We have a lot of people from out-of-state, who only come and want to Fish for one day. This would really hurt our tourism business at The Outpost Lodge. Please do not take this away. You will turn a lot of people out of South Dakota.

Scott Van Liere

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Strongly oppose doing away with 1 day fishing licenses. The Gfp in my opinion would lose more revenue doing away with 1 day licenses, you are making it more expensive for people to come fishing and would lose more tourism dollars for the state. Also makes no sense to sell 3 day licenses with a 2 day possession limit.

Kathy Kocer

Pierre SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Victor Wood

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

A lot of people have been here for work a few days and a one day license gives them a chance to get to know what a wonderful fishery we have in SD.

Lewis Valentz

Gettysburg SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am 100% against doing away with one day fishing license. I also think that if you want to change things or people will buy an extended number of days for Fishing. Then give him a three day possession limit to take home. That would make more sense to me then taking away options for people who only want to fish a couple days. Give them an incentive to buy a three day so they can take their three days limit home.

Brad Taylor

Ft. Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Jeremey Frost

Onida SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

To Whom It May Concern,

I write to express my strong disagreement with the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department's proposal to eliminate the one-day fishing license in favor of offering only a three-day license. I believe that this change would be detrimental to local businesses and the economy, as well as counterintuitive to the interests of promoting the sport of fishing in our state.

The one-day fishing license serves as a crucial entry point for those who may be new to fishing or who only have the time for a brief outing. By eliminating this option, we discourage casual or first-time anglers from participating, thereby reducing foot traffic to businesses that rely on fishing tourism, such as bait and tackle shops, boat rentals, and other related services.

Moreover, it's worth considering that not everyone who fishes is a seasoned angler looking to spend multiple days on the water. Day-trippers, tourists, and families often opt for the convenience of a one-day license. Cutting this option limits their engagement with the sport and with the businesses that facilitate it.

I strongly urge the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department to reconsider this proposal, keeping in mind the broader economic implications and the interests of the entire fishing community in our state.

Sincerely

Jeremey Frost

Mark Ammann

Wilmot Sd SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am a fishing guide and some of my clients just come to fish for one day. Living near the border in the northeast corner this is a big deal. Since my livelihood depends on this proposal being denied I am strongly opposed to this idea.

Thank you

Andrew Sladky

Gretna NE

Position: oppose

Comment:

I come up fairly often (and now more that I have a new Lund) and my friends usually get one day licenses if we go up quick for the weekend.

Kent Hutcheson

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Oppose changes also think if you are going to change for a 3 day license and only allow for two day possession limits you need to consider how you can allow a limit for each of the days paid for Many of my customers opp for 2 day trips the next year because of this limit restriction Resulting in a loss of tourism dollars for all of us Hutch Hutch's Guide

Chad Schilling

Akaska SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Leave it the way it is. A person visiting for one day shouldn't have to buy a 3 day license or pay for a habitat stamp that doesn't help 2/3 of the state.

Buch Anderson

Gettysburg SD

Position: other

Comment:

I understand why you want to eliminate the one day license and agree with the reason (buying to avoid the habitat stamp fee) but why not leave the license as is but add the requirement to buy the stamp?

Gerald Berg

Pierre SD

Position: support

Comment:

This should be done away with or if keeping the single day must still purchase habitat stamp

Sean Finley

Pierre SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Why would the State want to limit 1 day licenses? People visiting SD often only have 1 or 2 days to fish. By not having the option to buy a 1 day license you create a situation where individuals will cheat the system and fish without a license risking the consequences, getting away with them most of the time, and the State collects No revenue or useable Marketing information on that individual. Just another "bone head" idea by government to limit use of a public resource in the name of preservation without knowing who your customers are.

Other

Patrick Ginsbach

Hot Springs SD

Position: other

Comment:

Roeber Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law. I went to access them on your website, and the response was, "Page cannot be found". Why not. And to try and contact your agency is impossible. Where is your general website email address? Get your act together. Answer my question, and please email me a copy of the Roeber Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law. Patrick Ginsbach

Julie Mendelson

Piedmont SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose petition 203, which would allow nonresidents to hunt raccoons with the aid of hounds

Nancy Hilding

Black Hawk, SD

Position: other

Comment:

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

The October 5-6th meeting will be held in Deadwood, which is in the mountain time zone. This is to advise SD GFP staff that when the meeting is held on Thursday, in a location on Mountain Time, the legal deadline for submitting comments is 11:59 MT on Sunday night, not 11:59 CT on Sunday night. If your IT team has the Public Comments on-line portal automatically set to allocate public comments received after 11:59 CT to the next meeting, when meeting is in MT, you are breaking the law.

If you are a person who sent them at 11:59 MT on Oct 1st and they are not included in the Oct 5th-6th meeting's Public comments, you have been deprived of your rights. We suggest all folks sending comments on Sunday nights before a MT meeting, check the public comments, which are printed/uploaded before the meeting to verify your comments were included.

Brenda Pusakrich

Hot Springs SD

Position: other

Comment:

writing in opposition to petition #203 that would allow nonresidents to hunt raccoons with the aid of hounds

Julie Anderson

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose petition #203 to allow nonresidents to hunt raccoons with the aid of hounds.

Dean Parker

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I'm writing in opposition of petition #203, which would allow nonresidents to hunt raccoons with dogs. South Dakotans do not want more hound hunting in our state.

Gelynn Passmore

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am writing in opposition to petition #203 that would allow nonresidents to hunt raccoons with the aid of hounds.

Sara Parker

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I'm writing in opposition of petition #203, which would expand opportunities for hunting raccoons with dogs.

Since 2013, when South Dakota Houndsmen petitioned and were granted permission to hunt mountain lions with dogs, they have continued to petition the Commission and been granted access to hound hunt lions on the prairie, in Custer State Park, pursuing from private land onto public land, and soon will likely be given access to hound hunt in the Black Hills. Please don't let the agenda of a special interest group dictate the policy of our wildlife. South Dakota wildlife and public lands belong to all South Dakotans.

At least 188,900 raccoons have been killed since the Nest Predator Bounty Program began (note this is submitted tails only – it doesn't include young left to start when their mothers were trapped in the spring and summer). This is very likely damaging our ecosystem and South Dakota certainly does not need to encourage the killing of more raccoons.

Christopher Blindert

Mitchell SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Nancy Hilding

Black Hawk SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I opposed letting non-residents hunt raccoons with hounds. I object to the nest predator bounty program. Letting non-residents hunt will just increase raccoon slaughter. I worry about raccoons & their kit being chewed up by dogs. I worry about orphaned kits in spring, if mom is killed during times of the nest predator bounty program. I don't think hound hunting should be a community recreation event, with non-hunters/non-dog handlers following the hounds.

Trout Spearing

Steven Gottfredson

Salt Lake City UT

Position: support

Comment:

I support the new trout spearing proposal. Trout are VERY difficult to spear and I suspect fewer than 10 trout per year will be harvested due to this regulation. However, spearfishing is growing in popularity as a sustainable way to get tasty fish. Opening access like this is important.

Ben Schutt

Oshkosh SD

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Adam Laehn

Minneapolis MN

Position: support

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Gary Haag

Hot Springs SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

As a long-time member of the Black Hills Flyfishers I support their position which is as follows; "The proposed regulation conflicts with our advocacy of sustainable fisheries and access for all anglers. Spearing will decrease the number of large rainbow trout in the Black Hills Fisheries Management Area available to hook and line anglers and provides an unnecessary advantage to the diver. This may also lead to unintended or malicious harvest of additional trout species (brown, brook, tiger, cutthroat, lake). Divers and their gear will impede hook and line angling opportunities, both from shore or by boat, in and around important fishing access locations. Elderly and disabled anglers will be without access to shore fishing opportunities when divers are occupying their favorite locations. We also have questions pertaining to which bodies of water will be openly available to spearing (i.e. Pactola afterbay, small black hills dams, etc.). We believe this regulation will be detrimental to the Black Hills Fisheries Management Area and should not be adopted by the commission."

Thank you for the chance to comment.

Gary Haag

Hot Springs, SD

Tim Bjork

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I adamantly oppose this proposal. We don't need any more pressure on our water and fishery resources, renewable or not. The argument that this is a put and take fishery is disingenuous in that taking as many stocked fish as possible doesn't seem to be a positive management philosophy. Thank you for taking the time to listen to the public.

Comment #12077 - Dean Henderickson



Comment #12102 - Colleen Venner



Comment #12110 - James Grainger





Comment #12123 - Erik Forman





601 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Suite 250
Washington, D.C. 20001
T. 202-737-7950
F. 202-273-7951

www.aopa.org

Comment # 12126 - Kyle Lewis

September 26th, 2023

Jeff VanMeeteren, Director of Parks and Recreation
South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Commission
523 East Capitol Ave
Pierre, SD 57501

TRANSMITTED VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL TO: Jeff.VanMeeteren@state.sd.us

RE: Custer State Park Airport (3V0) / AOPA Public Comments

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), the world's largest aviation organization, is a strong advocate for safe, efficient, accessible, and sustainable airports. Small community airports support general aviation daily. Flight training, aero-medical, law enforcement, recreation, and business travel are only a few of the uses general aviation airports see every day.

AOPA encourages the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission to maintain the Custer State Airport as a public-use airport. We believe that the airport has a high value to recreational aviation, providing direct access to Custer State Park by general aviation. The airport could also be used as a medical airlift location, given its strategic location within the state park.

AOPA understands the major financial responsibility associated with a runway pavement reconstruction project since the airport is not eligible for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Improvement Plan (AIP) grants. AOPA supports an effort to remove the troubled pavement, create a turf runway, and look at private investment into infrastructure to support the access and sustainability of the airport. The Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF) is a nationally recognized aviation organization that has broad experience in coordinating with private, local, state, and federal agencies on recreational airstrip investment. The RAF has a large network of volunteers and financial investment, through an airfield grant program, to procure and create unique aviation experiences. Custer State Park Airport aligns with the mission and goals of the RAF, and AOPA membership for access to small general aviation airports.

If the commission were to agree to invest in a turf runway for Custer State Park Airport, there would be no loss of utility to the airport, and this would encourage more use by recreational aviators. The maintenance of a turf runway, when compared to the maintenance of a paved runway over time is much less. No crack sealing, no crack mitigation, no seal coating, and no reconstruction or rehabilitation every 15-20 years. With assistance from the RAF, volunteers may be utilized to maintain certain aspects of the airport, and the RAF, along with AOPA, could market

the airport to our members and users. The underutilized airport has the potential to become a better-suited facility for aviators and visitors to Custer State Park.

AOPA is willing to answer any questions, provide more direct feedback, or facilitate any future discussions with our membership.

Submitted Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Lewis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kyle Lewis
Great Lakes Regional Manager • Airports and State Advocacy
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
kyle.lewis@aopa.org

cc:
Jack Dokken, Air, Rail and Transit Program Manager
Jon Becker, Aeronautics Planning Engineer
Thomas Koch, Airport Inspector
Brad Remmich, Airport Construction Specialist
Bill McGlynn, President, RAF
John McKenna, Chairman, RAF
Jeff Russell, Director, RAF
Karl Jungclaus, RAF SD State Liaison



Comment #12127 - Jeffrey Russell

September 21, 2023

Mr. Jeff VanMeeteren
Director of Parks and Recreation
South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks

Dear Mr. VanMeeteren:

The RAF has recently become aware of your agency's intent to close the Custer State Park Airport. This concerns us greatly as the CSP airport is an airport with very high recreational value as it provides access to the premiere state park of South Dakota. A number of our supporters residing in South Dakota have reached out to us with the hope that our organization can help to keep this airport open. I am writing this letter to you to express our interest in setting up a meeting to discuss the future of the airport.

Our organization consists of 12,000 supporters/volunteers in all fifty states. Our mission is to preserve, improve, and create airports for recreational access. We believe the Custer State Park airport is highly aligned with our mission and we are sincerely interested in seeing it remain open to the public.

In our twenty-year history, we have been involved with dozens of recreational airports around the country. This involvement varies from simply volunteering our time with the maintenance of an airport all the way to leasing or owning an airport for public access. Of particular interest to you may be our long-standing relationships with public land management agencies working together on airports. We have agreements in place with the US Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and many state departments of resources. In Michigan, for example, we lease two airstrips from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. In addition to the on-going maintenance at these airports, we have also done a number of capital improvements to increase the amenities at the airstrips. I welcome you to visit our website to learn more about our organization. www.theraf.org

Please let us know when you may be available to meet to discuss the future of Custer State Park Airport.

Thanks for your time and attention.

Jeff Russell
Director – Recreational Aviation Foundation

cc: John McKenna – RAF Chairman
Karl Jungclaus – RAF SD State Liaison

Comment #12140 - Noah Hudson



**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH AND PARKS**

A Public Hearing will be held at Cadillac Jacks Gaming Resort, 360 Main Street, Deadwood, SD, 57732 at 2:00PM (Mountain Time) on Thursday, October 5, 2023, to consider adoption, amendment and repeal of Rules pertaining to:

1. 41:03:03:03.01 - Park entrance license exemptions.

Effect: The proposed rule change would consolidate all park entrance license exemptions into one rule.

Reason: Simplification of administrative rules provides greater clarity and understanding to the public.

2. 41:03:03:03.02 - Open house park entrance license

Effect: The proposed rule change would modify park entrance license exemptions and repeal the rule in its entirety by consolidating park entrance license exemptions into one rule.

Reason: The current park entrance license exemption structure is not fulfilling its intended purpose and needs to be modified.

3. 41:06:62:03 - Number of licenses (Hunt for Habitat).

Effect: Modify administrative rule to adjust license allocations that are issued in the Hunt for Habitat drawing.

Reason: Modifying license packages will provide an opportunity to generate additional revenue for wildlife habitat.

Interested persons will be given reasonable opportunity to submit amendments, data, opinions, arguments, and their views, either orally or in writing (or both) at the hearing. Persons unable to attend the hearing may mail amendments, data, opinions, arguments, and their views to the office of the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, Foss Building, 523 East Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota 57501, or by going to the GFP

website at <http://gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions>. All persons who desire to submit written amendments, data, opinions, arguments, and their views by mail or email are encouraged to mail or transmit the same in sufficient time so that it is received by and in the office of the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks 72 hours prior to the date of the hearing. Interested persons will be given reasonable opportunity to submit amendments, data, opinions, arguments, and their views, either orally or in writing (or both) to the Commission for their consideration. All written and email comments must include the name, home town/city, and state of the person submitting the comments.

The above rule proposals are available for review on the internet by going to <https://rules.sd.gov/> and copies of the proposed rules may be requested from the office of the Secretary of the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, Foss Building, 523 East Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota 57501. Notice is further given to individuals with disabilities that this hearing is being held in a physically accessible place. Any individuals with disabilities who will require a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the hearing should submit a request to the undersigned at 605.773.3718 or 605.223.7684 (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf).

Dated this 11th day of September, 2023.





Kevin Robling, Secretary

Public Hearing is published at the approximate cost of \$_____.

DEPARTMENT OF GAME, FISH, AND PARKS NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

This meeting will be held in person, via zoom/conference call, and Livestream. Listen to the meeting beginning at 1:00 p.m. CST via Livestream at <https://www.sd.net/remote1/> or join via zoom by clicking on the link below. Depending on your application, you may be required to enter the meeting ID and password. Remember to **enter your display name and mute your microphone**. To help keep background noise and distractions to a minimum, make sure you **mute your microphone and turn off your video** when you are not speaking.

Thursday, October 5, 2023, at 1 pm MT and Friday, October 6, 2023, at 8 am MT,

Zoom Meeting Link <https://state-sd.zoom.us/j/93912915359?pwd=K2FVZzdQSXJTY0NwWG5mSWpSazUwdz09>
or join via conference call Dial 1 669 444 9171 Meeting ID: 939 1291 5359 Passcode: 0565645

Public Input: To provide comments, join the meeting in person, via zoom, or via conference call per the info above. To conduct the public hearing and/or open forum as efficiently as possible, we ask those wishing to testify to **register by 1:00 pm MT the day of the meeting by email to Liz.Kierl@state.sd.us**. **Testifiers should provide their full names, whom they represent, their city of residence, and which proposed topic they will address.**

Written comments can be submitted at <https://gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions/>. To be included in the public record, comments must include the complete name and city of residence and meet the **submission deadline of seventy-two hours before the meeting (not including the day of the meeting)**.

Dated this 29th day of September 2023.

s/ Stephanie Rissler

Stephanie Rissler, GFP Commission Chair