

Public Comments

Cancellation Policy

Jamey Tollefson

Lead SD

Position: other

Comment:

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

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

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

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

Elk Season

Mitchell Iverson

Spearfish SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

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

License Forms and Fees

Jeff Gulbransen

Keystone SD

Position: other

Comment:

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

Other

Scott Bakker

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I oppose the nest predator bounty program.

Sara Parker

Sioux Falls SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

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

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

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

Carol Kendall

Rapid City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

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

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

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

Diana Holden

Parkston SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

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

Waterfowl Seasons

Robert Curtis

Redfield SD

Position: other

Comment:

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

To Whom it May Concern,

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

Sincerely,

Caitlin Gust - Hermosa, SD