

LANDOWNERS MATTER

SPRING 2021





Hey there!

First, I want to take this opportunity to say thank you! Thank you for being stewards of the land, and for making land management decisions that benefit current and future generations across South Dakota.

Agriculture is the heartbeat of this great state and throughout my life and still today it remains a big part of who I am. As a producer myself, I understand the hard work and preparation that comes with unpredictable market conditions, weather, and operating costs. I know that cooperative partnerships are critical to the success of our fish, wildlife, habitat and access programs. Your efforts to improve soil health, increase land productivity, and produce abundant wildlife ensures the sustainability of our state's natural resources for our kids and grandkids. My team and I cannot thank you enough for those investments.

I have been given the fortunate honor by Governor Noem to lead the Department of Game, Fish and Parks. Every day, team GFP strives to enhance South Dakota's quality of life through our great outdoors by providing excellent customer service, creating partnerships with landowners like you, and focusing on habitat development while expanding public access opportunities. We offer programs to increase habitat and decrease wildlife damage. I encourage you to learn more about them throughout this publication.

You know your operation better than anyone, and your success matters to us. Our team of experts are here to help you through your next planning phase and offer solutions that will work for you. Taking care of the land is our number one priority because then we know it will take care of us.

Give us a call. We can't wait to start working with you.

Kevin Robling, Department Secretary
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

NEST PREDATOR BOUNTY PROGRAM UPDATE

KEITH FISK | PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

As part of Governor Noem's Second Century Initiative, GFP will continue the Nest Predator Bounty Program in 2021. This will be the third year for the program and was designed to enhance pheasant and duck nest success by removing nest predators (i.e. raccoon, striped skunk, opossum, badger, and red fox) from the landscape, while at the same time introducing people (in particular youth) to trapping and outdoor recreation. For 2021, GFP will offer a \$10/tail bounty for eligible nest predators removed during the timeframe of April 1st to July 1st, unless a \$500,000 program maximum is reached.

Every year, nest predators destroy thousands of nests of upland birds, like pheasants and ducks in South Dakota. In many areas, approximately 75% of pheasant and duck nests are destroyed by predators each year. Previous research has indicated that intense predator removal efforts combined with quality habitat can increase pheasant and duck nest success at localized levels. The Nest Predator Bounty Program not only gets more people

out trapping and removing predators, but also engages South Dakotans in outdoor activities and makes them aware of the importance of conservation and wildlife management while also increasing broader support for habitat.

Since the program began in 2019, over 81,000 nest predators have been removed with over 90% of those nest predators harvested in eastern South Dakota. Nearly 4,300 individuals have participated in the program with approximately 15% being less than 18 years old. To encourage even greater participation in 2021, GFP will hold a weekly giveaway drawing for all youth (under the age of 18) that participate in the program. The giveaway will consist of a GFP-sponsored trapping package that includes three live traps, knife, and a copy of the National Trappers Association Trapping Handbook. Winners will be contacted directly by GFP. For more information on the Nest Predator Bounty Program, visit gfp.sd.gov/bounty-program/

2021 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

HEATHER VILLA | WILDLIFE ADMINISTRATION SECTION CHIEF

Legislative Session 2021 brought some great changes for GFP and our customers. Governor Noem and Legislators passed legislation that will have a positive impact on the Department and the people we serve.

HB1034 – An Act to revise certain youth hunting requirements.

House Bill 1034 addresses the need to simplify youth hunting and fishing requirements. Complicated regulations are one of the top five barriers to participation in hunting and fishing. This piece of legislation is aimed at addressing a national decline in hunting and fishing by making it easier for parents and kids to understand what licenses are needed and when.

Main takeaways:

- » Everyone under the age of 18 is considered youth.
- » A fishing license is NOT REQUIRED for youth.
- » Nonresident Family Fishing license is repealed.
- » Nonresident youth are now eligible to participate in mentored hunting.
 - For nonresident youth partaking in mentored big game hunting, they must provide the name, address, and phone number of a resident that is sponsoring the application.

HB1047 – An Act to provide limited deer and antelope licenses to landowners.

House Bill 1047 addresses nonresident landowners east river by giving them an opportunity to hunt certain big game on their

own land. This bill authorizes a nonresident that owns 160+ contiguous acres used for agricultural purposes east river that they are the owner/operator of, to qualify for the landowner tag for their own land. The nonresident landowner may also apply for two antlerless deer licenses in units where the free antlerless licenses are available. There are a total of 250 total nonresident landowner-on-own-land licenses to be allocated through a lottery draw system.

All licenses are valid only on the land owned by the landowner.

HB1140 – An Act to restrict the entry of conservation officers onto certain private land without permission.

House Bill 1140 requires a conservation officer, in the course of performing their duties, to either have a warrant or the explicit or implied permission of the landowner or lessee before entering private land. Three exceptions to this law allow a conservation officer to enter private land; if an officer has reason to believe a violation has occurred, in order to dispatch crippled or diseased animals and in emergency situations. For more information, please see the Open Fields Article on page 4.

These regulation changes go into effect on July 1, 2021. Please reach out to a department representative if you have further questions.

ENHANCING LANDOWNER RELATIONSHIPS

SAM SCHELHAAS | LAW ENFORCEMENT SECTION CHIEF

Eighty percent of South Dakota is privately owned. This means landowners are key partners in habitat and wildlife conservation. With the passing of House Bill 1140, Conservation Officers and other department staff will continue to strengthen landowner relationships while implementing landowner programs and protecting our natural resources.

This bill, which will become law on July 1, requires Conservation Officers to have permission from landowners before entering private property. Three exceptions to this law allow a conservation officer to enter private land; if an officer has reason to believe a violation has occurred, in order to dispatch crippled or diseased animals and in emergency situations. The complete bill can be found at gfp.sd.gov/legislative-updates/.

GFP understands that the landowners of South Dakota care deeply about the natural resources and are partners in the conservation, management, and protection of our wildlife. While there may be changes in the way Conservation Officers conduct their regulatory compliance activities, GFP remains dedicated to the protection of our state's natural resources. GFP has established hundreds, if not thousands, of great relationships with many of you and we will continue to work hard to forge new relationships with farmers and ranchers across the state. Conservation Officers will continue to stop in at farms and ranches to have a cup of coffee and talk about the local high school football team or to work with you to develop habitat plans on your property or to help mitigate the damage caused by wildlife. This really is a partnership.

When a new Conservation Officer begins their career with GFP, they are given the Conservation Law Enforcement Creed. One

of the tenants of that creed is "Be a vigilant guardian of natural resources on behalf of the citizens of the State of South Dakota". This truly requires our Conservation Officers to work in partnership with all our citizens to protect and guard the natural resources of this state. We do not have enough conservation officers to do this work alone and the partnerships we have with you, the landowners of this state, are especially important to help ensure the continued protection and preservation of our fish and wildlife resources for future generations.

Many of you may already know the conservation officer in your area, but some of you may not. Like every profession, we have employee turnover with new Conservation Officers entering the workforce, retirements, or officers relocating to other locations around the state. Within the pages of this publication you will find a list of all our current Conservation Officers. Look through the directory and give your local officer a call. For some, it may be reconnecting with an old friend you haven't spoken to in a while and for others it may be the first time you have ever talked to a Conservation Officer.

With current vacancies across the state, some of you don't have a Conservation Officer in your area at this time. However, you can still call on us day or night, it just might take us a little longer to get there! If you have questions about HB 1140 or any other bills, please give us a call and we'd be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Thank you for all you do to provide a place for fish and wildlife and for welcoming hunters and anglers onto your property.



GIANT CANADA GOOSE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

ROCCO MURANO | SENIOR WATERFOWL BIOLOGIST

Beginning in the spring of 2020, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) staff and a diverse group of stakeholders began work on an update and re-tooling of the Giant Canada Goose Management Plan that was set to expire in 2021. Stakeholders included hunters, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, producers from various regions, and representatives from both agricultural and sportsman's groups. The old management plan structure was adjusted, splitting it into a shortened action plan updated every five years and a longer foundational document updated annually.

As part of this process two stakeholder meetings were held virtually to gather input and help guide the revision of the giant Canada goose action plan. As with any management plan, the discussion centered around population goals, depredation, and hunter opportunity. It is always top of mind for GFP to balance the needs of various groups, biological realities of wildlife species being managed, and the greater good of the people of South Dakota.

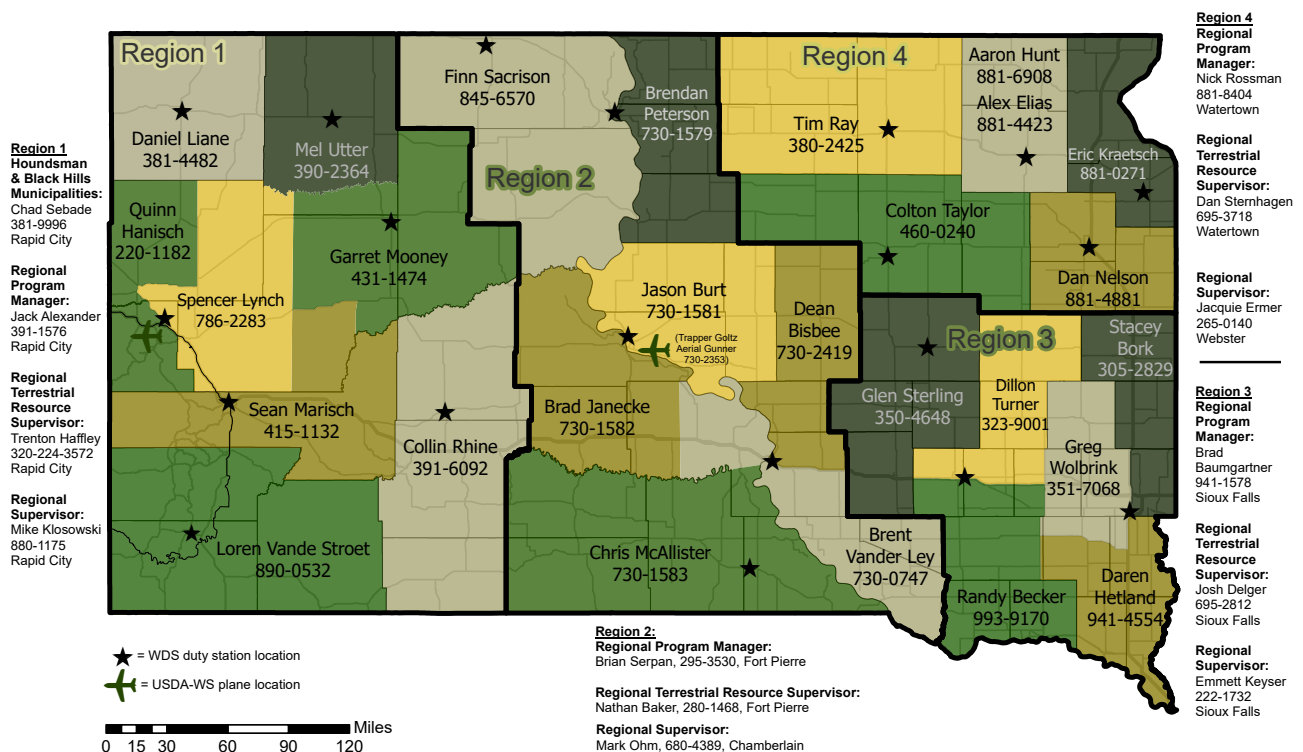
By the end of the stakeholder process consensus was reached that the current population objective was appropriate and provided ample hunting opportunity as well as manageable goose damage to crops while within objective. It was also

recognized that we needed to be more proactive to responding to population changes in South Dakotas giant Canada goose flock. This led to eliminating the need for populations to be above or below objective for two consecutive years before regulations are adjusted.

As in the past, hunters will continue to be the primary tool for the management of giant Canada geese along with a suite of various techniques to assist producers with crop damage from geese. Due to increasing goose populations the GFP Commission recently adopted several liberalizations in goose hunting regulations including expanding the August Management Take (AMT), adding days to the early fall Canada goose season, and increasing the daily bag in early fall from 8 to 15. In addition, we continue to look for new and innovative ways to increase hunter harvest and hunter access to private lands for goose hunting. As, always, GFP remains committed to providing excellent customer service to affected producers through its wildlife damage program.

The Giant Canada Goose Action plan was formally adopted by the Commission at its March meeting and more information can be found at gfp.sd.gov/management-plans/.

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Wildlife Damage Management Program



CHAP | THE “CATCH ALL” PUBLIC HUNTING ACCESS PROGRAM FOR PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

MARK NORTON | HUNTING ACCESS & FARM BILL COORDINATOR

Controlled Hunting Access Program (CHAP) is a public hunting access program delivered by South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) and designed for landowners who would be willing to allow limited public hunting access. CHAP is an extremely flexible program by which landowners can set limits as simple as requiring hunters to sign-in to hunt, or more complex limits such as allowing hunting for only certain game species, with certain equipment,



during certain seasons, on certain days, to a certain number of hunters per day. GFP currently has land enrolled in CHAP agreements across the entire state utilizing the full spectrum of these limitations.

One example is an existing CHAP area that allows an unlimited number of hunters per day but requires hunters to sign-in at registration site. Another example only allows up to 2 archery deer or turkey hunters per day, and hunters register to hunt the area through an on-line registration system. GFP also has CHAP areas open to youth only big game or small game hunting. Some CHAP areas are closed during the opening weekend of a season to allow the landowner's family and friends to hunt before the public can hunt the rest of a season. Other CHAP areas require that the hunters contact the landowner to gain a permission slip. These are a few examples of how the CHAP program can work. Every CHAP contract can be custom tailored to meet a landowners' desire to allow controlled public hunting on their land while also receiving a payment from GFP based on how many hunters use the area.

The one constant is that all CHAP areas have a check-in box where hunters either sign-in or deposit the permission slip they obtained at the check-in site, on-line, or from the landowner. As described in the examples above this allows the landowner to be as engaged as he or she would like. The landowner can meet every hunter to provide the registration slip or be completely hands free with a sign-in sheet or the on-line registration system. Either way this program allows GFP or the landowner to know who is hunting the property. Any hunter hunting a CHAP area without a permission slip can be cited with trespassing.

Payments from GFP are based on the number of hunters that hunt the property - that number being determined from the information collected in the check-in box. The payment per hunter per day is \$10, with a \$250 minimum annual payment and an additional \$250 payment for CHAP areas that are larger than 1,000 acres. Additional incentives may be offered for multi-year agreements providing priority deer, elk, pheasant, turkey, and/or waterfowl hunting opportunities.

All hunting is walk-in only unless there are designated trails allowing other types of access. Hunters are responsible for knowing the rules or restrictions of the CHAP area which are provided by GFP. Any land in the CHAP program will be posted with boundary signs, have a site specific aerial imagery map that clearly shows the boundary, the location of the check-in box, locations of GFP provided hunting blinds if they exist, and any other pertinent information like parking sites or designated trails. The location of all CHAP areas are also shown in the South Dakota Public Hunting Atlas. State law generally provides landowners with immunity for injury to any person using their land enrolled in CHAP for hunting purposes.

If you have considered opening your land up for public hunting but had some reservations this program can work to resolve your concerns and allow you to provide hunters memorable hunting experiences that can last a lifetime. If you are interested in learning more about CHAP or placing your land in CHAP, contact your local conservation officer or GFP office.

STAFF SHOWCASE

GFP Conservation Officers, Habitat Biologists and Wildlife Damage Specialists strive to provide South Dakota's landowners with the best service possible. Whether that's answering questions about habitat programs, helping with predator control, or enrolling land in one of our many access programs our staff are always here to help.



DILLON BATES (CO)

Coverage Area: Tripp, Todd, Mellette and Gregory counties

Fun Fact: I've lived and worked in six different states.

Contact: 605-730-1576,
Office is located at 325
Monroe St. in Winner



MATTHEW GRUNIG (HABITAT)

Coverage Area: Southeastern South Dakota

Fun Fact: Matt has a black lab named Otter that cannot swim.

Contact: Phone: 605.350.1725
Email: Matthew.Grunig@state.sd.us



LOREN VANDESTROET (WDS)

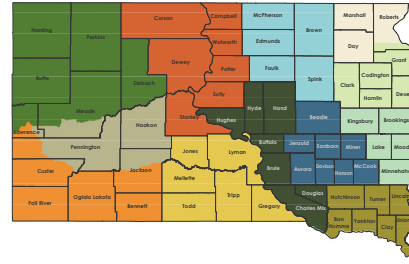
Coverage Area: Fall River, Oglala, Custer counties

Fun Fact: Loren enjoys working his German Shorthair and Mountain Cur, Jack and Jill."

Contact: Phone: 605-890-0532

CONSERVATION OFFICERS

*DENOTES DISTRICT CONSERVATION OFFICER SUPERVISOR



Martin	Tom Beck	605.381.6433
Hill City	Jeff Edwards	605.381.9995
Hot Springs	D.J. Schroeder	605.381.6438
Hot Springs	Duane Stanley	605.890.0239
Custer	Ron Tietfort	605.431.7048
Custer	Kevin Stoltz	605.431.0010
Custer	Jim Ganser	605.431.8099
Spearfish	Brian Meiers*	605.391.6023

Wall	Jenna Capper	605.391.2132
Rapid City	Chris Dekker	605.390.0923
Rapid City	Ross Fees	605.381.3734
Rapid City	Adam Geigle*	605.390.1230

Belle Fourche	Bill Eastman	605.391.1575
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Sturgis	Ryan Pearson	605.391.0836
Spearfish	Josh Thompson	605.381.4704
Spearfish	Mike Apland*	605.391.1574

Mobridge	Jacob Schwint	605.845.6261
Gettysburg	Kendyll Jones	605.730.1568
Onida	Tyler Kregelberg	605.730.1384
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Platte	Jeff Martin*	605.730.1575

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Chamberlain	Diana Landegent	605.730.1578
Miller	Cory Flor*	605.680.0003

Chamberlain	Travis March	605.730.1573
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Ft. Pierre	John Murphy*	605.730.1571

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Webster	Austin Norton	605.881.2177
Webster	Calvin Meyer	605.237.3275
Clark	Zach Thomsen	605.881.2260
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Aberdeen	Tim McCurdy*	605.380.4572

Clear Lake	Adam Behnke	605.881.3780
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Milbank	Blake Swanson	605.881.3779
Watertown	Seth Lorton	605.880.0009
Milbank	Jamie Pekelder*	605.881.3778

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Howard	Evan Meyer*	605.553.4299

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Flandreau	Trevor Johnson	605.941.4552
Madison	Cody Symens	605.480.3364
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Sioux Falls	Jeremy Rakowicz*	605.941.0074

Tyndall	Todd Crownover	605.360.0497
Vermillion	Tony Stokely	605.677.7814
Canton	Josh Vanden Bosch	605.940.0222
Yankton	Scott Pospishill	605.760.3997
Yankton	Don Allaway	605.350.1669
Yankton	Dan Altman*	605.941.4549

LANDOWNERS MATTER

GAME, FISH AND PARKS | 523 EAST CAPITOL AVE | PIERRE, SD 57501

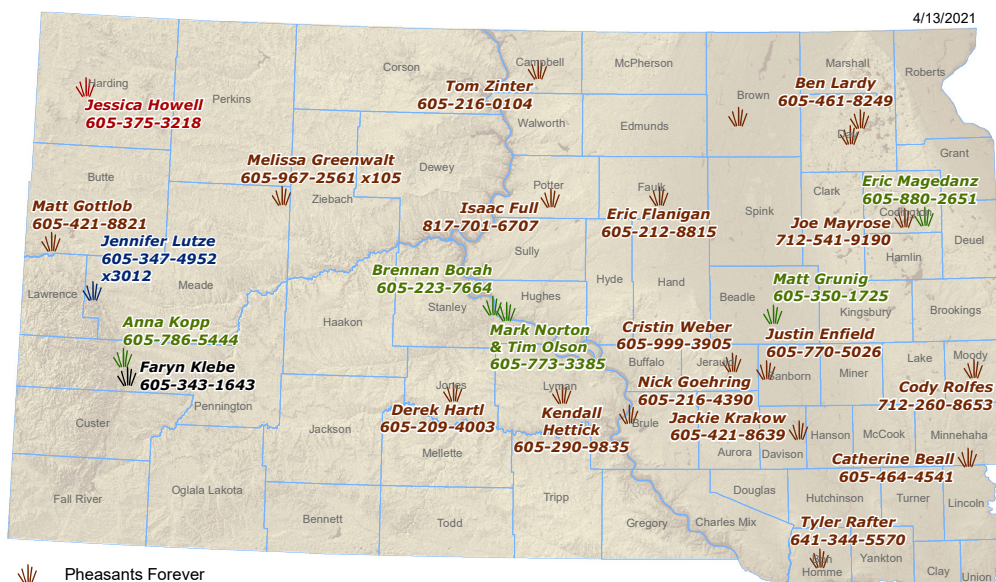







The Game, Fish and Parks' mission is to provide sustainable outdoor recreational opportunities through responsible management of our state's parks, fisheries and wildlife by fostering partnerships, cultivating stewardships and safely connecting people with the outdoors.

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South Dakota Habitat Advisors

4/13/2021



-  Pheasants Forever
-  SD Game, Fish & Parks
-  American Bird Conservancy
-  Bird Conservancy of the Rockies
-  National Wild Turkey Federation

