

**GAME, FISH AND PARKS COMMISSION ACTION  
FINALIZATION**

**Spring Wild Turkey Hunting Season  
Chapter 41:06:13; 41:03:01**

<b>Commission Meeting Dates:</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>July 7-8, 2022</b>	<b>Spearfish</b>
	<b>Public Hearing</b>	<b>October 6, 2022</b>	<b>Rapid City</b>
	<b>Finalization</b>	<b>October 6-7, 2022</b>	<b>Rapid City</b>

**COMMISSION PROPOSAL**

**Duration of Proposal:** 2023 and 2024 seasons (only 2023 season dates listed below)

**Season Dates:**

April 8 – May 31, 2023	Single-season Prairie units
April 22 – May 31, 2023	Black Hills
April 8 – April 30, 2023	Split-season early Prairie units
May 1 – May 31, 2023	Split-season late Prairie units

\*Depending on the geographic area being hunted, the mentored and archery spring seasons align with the prairie and Black Hills seasons, respectively.

**Licenses:**

Black Hills:	Unlimited resident and nonresident one-tag “male turkey” licenses
Prairie:	6,332 resident and 700 nonresident one-tag “male turkey” licenses 260 resident and 56 nonresident two-tag “male turkey” licenses
Archery:	Unlimited resident and nonresident one-tag “male turkey” licenses
Mentored:	Unlimited resident and nonresident one-tag “male turkey” licenses

**Access Permits:**

Access permits valid April 8-30
Good Earth State Park: 5 archery turkey access permits
Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve: 30 archery turkey access permits
Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve: 20 mentored turkey access permits

**Requirements and Restrictions:**

1. Turkey hunters may apply for and receive one license in each of the Black Hills, Prairie, and Archery Units in the first and second lottery drawings.
2. Turkey hunters may purchase only one Black Hills and one archery turkey license.
3. One-half of the licenses in each prairie unit are available for landowner/operator preference.
4. Excluding that portion of Fall River County within Unit PST-27A, prairie units adjoining the White River and Cheyenne River also include an adjacent area one mile wide on the opposite side of the river.
5. No person may shoot a turkey in a tree or roost.
6. A person may use only bow and arrow, a shotgun using shot shells or a muzzleloading shotgun to hunt turkeys during the spring turkey season.

**Proposed changes from last year:**

1. Adjust the maximum number of licenses available in administrative rule from no more than 5,807 to 10,000 one-tag “male turkey” licenses and from no more than 600 to 2,500 two-tag “male turkey” licenses.
2. Change the proposed season start date from the 3rd Saturday in April to the 4th Saturday in April for the Black Hills spring turkey season.
  - a. April 22 – May 31, 2023
  - b. April 27 – May 31, 2024
3. Eliminate Unit BST-BH2, which provides for a second Black Hills spring turkey licenses for resident hunters.
4. For archery and mentored spring turkey licenses, season start dates would align with the prairie and Black Hills seasons, respectively.
5. For the Fall River prairie hunting unit, remove the allowance to hunt within one mile of the Cheyenne River in the Black Hills hunting unit.

<b>APPROVE</b> _____	<b>MODIFY</b> _____	<b>REJECT</b> _____	<b>NO ACTION</b> _____
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## DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Recommended changes from proposal: None.

## SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

Results from recent research indicates poor reproduction, primarily within the Black Hills (central and northern Hills) but is difficult to ascertain the direct cause/s due to numerous variables involved, such as predation, nutrition, weather, grouse dominance/behavior. Based on nesting chronology and gobbling activity, the recommendation to start seasons later is to increase population performance. In addition, negative feedback from hunters regarding their hunting experience (i.e., lack of gobbling activity, difficult time finding turkeys) is a justification for this recommendation. See below for other supportive information to justify recommendation:

- Post-breeding management is the primary strategy that should be imposed for wild turkey management (i.e., start spring hunting seasons at median incubation dates).
- Median incubation dates range from May 10-16 in the Black Hills. Many hens start incubation around May 1-3<sup>rd</sup> in the southern Black Hills.
- Modeling suggests that harvesting  $\leq 30\%$  of the male population allows for continued population growth and higher quality hunting.
- Research in the Black Hills indicates that annual survival of radio-collared adult males was 42% and spring harvest was the primary mortality factor in the Black Hills.
- Intensive hunting in southern Alabama caused a shortage of males and lowered female turkey productivity through infertile clutches.
- Current unpublished research in Georgia and Tennessee indicates dominance hierarchies in adult gobblers may be important in maintaining for turkey productivity. Disruptions in these dominance hierarchies can delay nesting and reduce nest survival in the southeast.
- Harvest management should try to not disrupt breeding of older males until they have a chance to breed which should be around median incubation dates.
- Less than 5% of younger male turkeys will breed under normal dominance hierarchies.

The alignment of all turkey seasons seems appropriate to meet the objectives of the change. Since the elimination of rifles for spring turkey hunting, archers have no disadvantage to shotgun hunters when it comes to the distance, etc. and it's difficult to justify one week only available to archery turkey hunters.

Unit BST-BH2 is currently closed via administrative rule and under the low abundance harvest strategy found within the wild turkey management plan. With a shortened season and increasing sales of unlimited archery turkey licenses, it is difficult to justify this second turkey license for South Dakota residents in the future.

The proposed maximum number of turkey licenses will be established in administrative rule and the GFP Commission via administrative action will determine specific number of licenses by tag types and allocation amongst hunting units.

Year	Licenses			Harvest			Success		
	BH	Prairie	Archery	BH	Prairie	Archery	BH	Prairie	Archery
2017	4,401	6,577	3,847	1,701	3,328	912	39%	45%	28%
2018	4,274	6,510	3,264	1,441	2,733	719	32%	38%	22%
2019	4,545	6,375	3,467	1,365	2,727	915	30%	39%	26%
2020	4,733	6,455	4,459	1,287	3,113	1,340	27%	44%	30%
2021	6,303	6,699	4,899	1,776	3,748	1,607	28%	51%	33%

\*Includes both resident and nonresident harvest statistics.

APPROVE \_\_\_\_\_ MODIFY \_\_\_\_\_ REJECT \_\_\_\_\_ NO ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

**DRAFT ADMINISTRATIVE RULE CHANGES**

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

**41:06:13:01. Spring wild turkey hunting season established -- Number and type of licenses available.** The spring prairie wild turkey hunting season is open from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day from the ~~first~~ second Saturday of April through May 31. The spring Black Hills wild turkey hunting season is open from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day from the fourth Saturday of April through May 31. The spring archery and mentored wild turkey hunting seasons are open from on-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day and the season dates align with the prairie and Black Hills, respectively. ~~in Unit AST-ST1, and from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day from the second third Saturday of April through May 31, or as otherwise provided in § 41:06:13:02, in all other units. Units BST-BH1 is and BST-BH2 are the Black Hills units. Unit AST-ST1 is the archery unit. All other units are prairie units.~~ The number of one-tag male turkey licenses issued is unlimited for residents and nonresidents in both the Black Hills and archery spring turkey hunting seasons. No more than ~~5,807~~ 10,000 one-tag male turkey and ~~600~~ 2,500 two-tag male turkey licenses may be issued to residents for the prairie spring turkey hunting season.

**41:06:13:02. Open units -- Exceptions.** The following is a description of the open spring turkey hunting units:

(1) Unit BST-BH1: excluding Custer State Park, Wind Cave National Park, Mount Rushmore National Memorial, and Jewel Cave National Monument, that portion of Lawrence County south of Interstate 90; that portion of Meade County west and south of Interstate 90; those portions of Pennington and Custer Counties west of State Highway 79; that portion of Fall River County north and west of a line beginning at the junction of the South Dakota-Wyoming border and U.S. Highway 18, then east along U.S. Highway 18 to its junction with the Cheyenne River, then east along the Cheyenne River to its junction with State Highway 79, then north along State Highway 79 to its junction with the Custer County line;

~~(2) Unit BST-BH2: the same boundaries as Unit BST-BH1; Unit BST-BH2 is closed;~~

(7) Unit PST-08A: Davison and Hanson Counties; Unit PST-08A is open beginning on the second Saturday of April through April 30;

(8) Unit PST-08B: Davison and Hanson Counties; Unit PST-08B is open beginning on May 1 through May 31;

(33) Unit PST-44A: Lincoln County; Unit PST-44A is open beginning on the second Saturday of April through April 30;

(34) Unit PST-44B: Lincoln County; Unit PST-44B is open beginning on May 1 through May 31;

(43) Unit PST-58B: that portion of Stanley County located at the Oahe Downstream Recreation Area to include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Land which is east and southeast of Powerhouse Road. This unit is bordered by the Missouri River to the east and the emergency spillway canal to the south. Unit PST-58B-is open beginning on the second Saturday of April~~5~~ through April 30, but only to licensed persons who use a wheelchair;

~~Licensees~~ Excluding that portion of Fall River County within Unit PST-27A, licensees in prairie units that utilize the Cheyenne or White Rivers as unit boundaries may hunt within one mile of either side of the river boundary, as well as in the remainder of the unit for which the license is issued.

**41:06:13:04. Application requirements and restrictions.** The following apply to all applications for license and licenses issued under this chapter:

(1) A resident may apply for no more than one prairie unit license, one Unit BST-BH1 license, ~~one Unit BST-BH2,~~ and one Unit AST-ST1 license during the first license application period. A resident

**APPROVE** \_\_\_\_\_ **MODIFY** \_\_\_\_\_ **REJECT** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO ACTION** \_\_\_\_\_

may not apply for or receive more than one Unit BST-BH1 license, ~~one Unit BST-BH2~~, or one Unit AST-ST1 license;

(5) Good Earth State Park is closed to spring turkey hunting except for five turkey licensees who possess a valid spring turkey archery license and an archery turkey access permit. Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve is closed to spring turkey hunting except for 30 licensees who possess a valid spring turkey archery license and an archery turkey access permit and 20 licensees who possess a valid mentored spring turkey archery license and access permit. The access permits may be issued by lottery drawing. Each access permit is valid from the second ~~first~~ Saturday of April through April 30.

**41:03:01:16. Restrictions on use of firearms, air guns, crossbows, and bows in the state park system -- Exceptions.** Uncased firearms, air guns, crossbows, and bows are prohibited in the state park system with the following exceptions:

(5) From October 1 through April 30, uncased firearms, air guns, crossbows, and bows are authorized for licensed hunters in the state park system during established hunting seasons with the following restrictions:

(d) A person who possesses a valid turkey license for Unit PST-48A, as described in chapter 41:06:13, is permitted to have an uncased shotgun using shotshells, a crossbow, a bow, or a muzzleloading shotgun within the boundary of Sica Hollow State Park from the second ~~first~~ Saturday of April through May 31; and

**41:06:13:05. Turkey hunting recruitment license -- Open area and eligibility.** A turkey hunting recruitment license is valid statewide, excluding Custer State Park, and is open from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day beginning on the first Saturday of April through May 31 during the spring turkey hunting seasons the open dates for the prairie and Black Hills seasons, respectively. A turkey hunting recruitment license is for a designated mentored youth as provided in SDCL 41-6-81.

APPROVE _____	MODIFY _____	REJECT _____	NO ACTION _____
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## RESIDENT/NONRESIDENT CRITERIA

1. The Issue
  - Why make the change, what are the change alternatives, how will public/stakeholder input be solicited, and how will the change be evaluated if implemented?
    - i. While the effect of the change is unknown, the objectives are to increase turkey population performance and to increase hunter satisfaction.
    - ii. Input will be solicited during the public comment period and GFP Commission public hearing.
2. Historical Considerations – Not Applicable
3. Biological Considerations
  - What is the current and projected status of the population and habitat conditions for these populations?
    - i. Turkey populations are stable across most of South Dakota, but not observing the reproduction level desired in the central and northern Black Hills and a few prairie units.
4. Social Considerations
  - Shortened season.
5. Financial considerations – Not Applicable

## RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, REACTIVATION (R3) CRITERIA

1. Does the regulation or fee inhibit a user's ability to participate? No.
2. Does the regulation increase the opportunity for new and existing users?
  - The recommended changes would shorten length of seasons, with objectives to increase turkey population performance and to increase hunter satisfaction.
3. How does the regulation impact the next generation of hunters, anglers, trappers and outdoor recreationists?
  - Not applicable.
4. Does the regulation enhance the quality of life for current and future generations by getting families outdoors? Not applicable.

## FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact is expected to the Department.

APPROVE \_\_\_\_\_ MODIFY \_\_\_\_\_ REJECT \_\_\_\_\_ NO ACTION \_\_\_\_\_