

LAW ENFORCEMENT

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

SOUTH DAKOTA GAME, FISH AND PARKS



GAME, FISH AND PARKS ADMINISTRATION

KEVIN ROBLING | Department Secretary | Pierre
TOM KIRSCHENMANN | Wildlife Division Director | Pierre
SCOTT SIMPSON | Parks Division Director | Pierre
ANDY ALBAN | Law Enforcement Program Administrator | Pierre

REGIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT/ADMINISTRATION

MIKE APLAND | District CO Supervisor | Spearfish
JANELLE BLAHA | Shooting Preserve/Permits Coordinator | Pierre
JOSH CARR | District CO Supervisor | Ft. Pierre
SPENCER DOWNEY | District CO Supervisor | Presho
CORY FLOR | District CO Supervisor | Miller
JOE GALBRAITH | District CO Supervisor | Ipswich
ADAM GEIGLE | District CO Supervisor | Rapid City
BRANDON GUST | Law Enforcement Training Supervisor | Madison
KRAIG HAASE | Regional CO Supervisor | Watertown
JOHN KANTA | Regional Supervisor | Rapid City
JOE KEETON | Law Enforcement Specialist | Rapid City
EMMETT KEYSER | Regional Supervisor | Sioux Falls
MIKE KLOSOWSKI | Regional Supervisor | Watertown
BOB LOSCO | Wildlife Investigator Supervisor | Webster
JIM McCORMICK | Regional CO Supervisor | Rapid City
TIM McCURDY | District CO Supervisor | Aberdeen
BRIAN MEIERS | District CO Supervisor | Spearfish
EVAN MEYER | District CO Supervisor | Howard
BRUCE NACHTIGALL | Law Enforcement Specialist | Rapid City
MARK OHM | Regional Supervisor | Chamberlain
ANGIE OWENS | Law Enforcement Program Secretary | Pierre
JAMIE PEKELDER | District CO Supervisor | Milbank
JEREMY RAKOWICZ | District CO Supervisor | Sioux Falls
JEREMY ROE | Regional CO Supervisor | Sioux Falls
SAM SCHELHAAS | District CO Supervisor | Yankton
NATE STUKEL | Wildlife Investigator | Gregory



CONSERVATION OFFICERS

DAN ALTMAN | Yankton
TOM BECK | Martin
ADAM BEHNKE | Clear Lake
JENNA CAPPER | Wall
NICK COCHRAN | Aberdeen
TODD CROWNOVER | Tyndall
CHRIS DEKKER | Rapid City
KENDYLL DEROUCHÉY | Gettysburg
CASEY DOWLER | Britton
JON DUNLAP | Miller
BILL EASTMAN | Belle Fourche
JEFF EDWARDS | Hill City
ROSS FEES | Rapid City
CRAIG FISHEL | Howard
LYNN GEUKE | Plankinton
JEFF GRENDLER | Brookings
JUSTIN HARMAN | Huron
JARED HILL | Humboldt
BRIAN HUMPHREY | Olivet
TREVOR JOHNSON | Flandreau
CHRIS KUNTZ | Sioux Falls
DIANA LANDEGENT | Chamberlain
KYLE LENZNER | Watertown
TRAVIS MARCH | Chamberlain
JEFF MARTIN | Platte
CALVIN MEYER | Webster
JOHN MURPHY | Ft. Pierre
KEITH MUTSCHLER | Lemmon
AUSTIN NORTON | Webster
RYAN PEARSON | Sturgis
SHANE PEDERSEN | Redfield
ANDY PETERSEN | Mitchell
DYLAN PETERSON | Ft. Pierre
A.J. POTTER | Presho
D.J. SCHROEDER | Hot Springs
JACOB SCHWINT | Mobridge
DEAN SHULTZ | Sisseton
DAN STERNHAGEN | Estelline
TONY STOKELY | Elk Point
BLAKE SWANSON | Milbank
CODY SYMENS | Madison
MATT TALBERT | Salem
JOSH THOMPSON | Spearfish
ZACH THOMSEN | Clark
RON TIETSORT | Custer
SHANE VANBOCKERN | Lake Preston
JOSH VANDENBOSCH | Canton
ERIC VOIGT | Ipswich

PARK RANGERS

JIM GANSER | Custer
JASON HAMIL | Pierre
SCOTT POSPISHIL | Yankton
ROB REULAND | Garretson
DUANE STANLEY | Hot Springs
KEVIN STOLZ | Custer

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The mission of South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks is to serve and connect people and families to the outdoors through effective management of our state's parks, fisheries, and wildlife resources.

NEW CONSERVATION OFFICERS



CRAIG FISHEL

joined the Conservation Officer Training Program in November 2020. Craig grew up in Humboldt, Iowa. He graduated from South Dakota State University

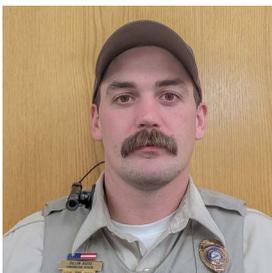
with a Bachelors degree in Natural Resource Law Enforcement. Prior to becoming a Conservation Officer, Craig worked for GFP as a Fisheries Intern and worked as Conservation Officer Intern. After he completed the training program, Craig was assigned to the Howard duty station.



JASON HAMIL

joined the Park Ranger Training Program in July of 2019. Jason grew up in Cambridge Iowa and attended College at the Indiana Bible College

in Indianapolis Indiana graduating with an Associate's Degree in Biblical Theology. Prior to joining GFP, Jason was a Hughes County Deputy for two years. After completing the training program, Jason was assigned to the Pierre duty station.



DILLON BATES

joined the Conservation Officer Training Program in November of 2019. Dillon grew up in Wilber, Nebraska and graduated from Doane College with

a Bachelors in Sociology. Prior to becoming a Conservation Officer, Dillon worked for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department as a Habitat and Access Technician and Colorado Parks and Wildlife as an Aquatic Biologist Technician. After completing the training program, Dillon was assigned to the Winner duty station.



JUSTIN HARMAN

joined the Conservation Officer Training Program in August 2019. Justin Grew up in Warsaw, Indiana. Justin graduated from

Ashford University with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Criminal Justice. Prior to becoming a Conservation Officer, Justin Spent four years in the Army as a cavalry scout. After completing the training program, Justin was assigned to the Huron duty station.



DON ALLAWAY

joined the Conservation Officer Training Program in March of 2020. Don is originally from Le Mars, IA. He is a graduate of SDSU's NRLE Program and

worked seasonally for both SDGFP as a Park Ranger Intern and the IA DNR as a water patrol officer. After he completed the training program, Don was assigned to the Yankton duty station.

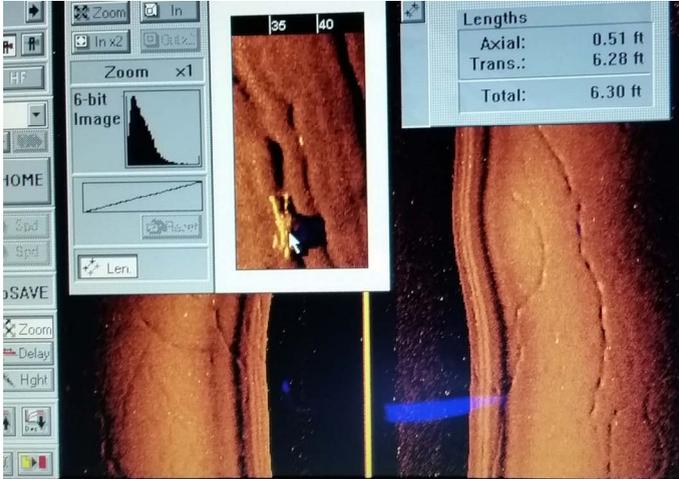


SETH LORTON

joined the Park Ranger Training Program in September of 2019. Seth grew up in Coldwater, Ohio and graduated from the University of

Minnesota Crookston with a Bachelors in Natural Resources Law Enforcement. Prior to becoming Park Ranger, Seth Worked for Ohio Division of Wildlife as a Natural Resource specialist, for North Dakota Parks and Recreation as a Park Ranger intern, and as a Corrections Officer in Minnesota. After completing the training program, Seth was assigned to the Watertown duty station.

SEARCH AND RESCUE



At full staff, 67 conservation officers patrol South Dakota's public waters to promote boating safety. An additional 19 supervisory officer's assist with boating safety patrol as needed across the state. Our Conservation Officers have a tremendous responsibility and are tasked with keeping folks safe on 2,000 miles of shoreline and 790,000 acres of recreational boating waters.

The 2020 boating season coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic. With the influx of people using our lakes, rivers, beaches, forests, campgrounds, and other areas, comes our responsibility to keep them safe while they enjoy the outdoor resources. Despite the challenges, our officers continued to ensure the safety of the recreating public on South Dakota waters.

Our officers are consistently called upon to lead and assist in Search and Rescue (SAR) efforts across the state. Over the past 5 years, we have averaged 90 Search and Rescues per year. Most of these SAR efforts result in a positive outcome and those victims return to their homes and families safely and without significant harm. Sadly, this is not always the case, and some SAR efforts turn into recovery operations.

Our primary goal in a recovery operation is to help grieving families/friends by bringing closure to tragedy. We train our officers consistently in SAR techniques so that we are prepared and efficient when we get the call. These operations

are a team effort, and we pride ourselves on working fluidly with other agencies and dive teams to bring resolve.

Often, recovery operations occur in less-than-ideal conditions. In preparation for this, our officers train in all types of conditions. Some of the most difficult recovery operations are those that occur in deep water. In these situations, we use Marine Sonic Side Scan Sonar Units (pictured left) and trained operators to locate the victims. This is a sophisticated piece of equipment that requires extensive training to maintain competence and efficiency.

Why do our officers dedicate themselves to this type of work? Because we care about people, and because we would want the same effort put forth if it were our loved one.



WHAT'S NEW: COVID-19

The year 2020 was definitely a year no one will forget. The COVID-19 pandemic that swept through the nation had us all wondering what the future held. How long were lockdowns and other restrictions going to last? What does social distancing look like? Coupling that with the civil unrest and violence against law enforcement across the nation made for turbulent and troubling times. The amount of anxiety and uncertainty everyone was feeling made 2020 a year to remember. One thing that the Department of Game, Fish and Parks decided early on was that the outdoors were going to remain open. The decision to keep the outdoors open was a welcomed decision for the people who like to be outside in the state of South Dakota. Outdoor enthusiasts did not take long to get back to their favorite lake, campground, trailhead, or river. Residents from other states experiencing lockdowns and shutdowns traveled to South Dakota to spend time enjoying the peace and tranquility that only time spent outdoors can provide. Whether it was watching the sunset from a favorite campsite or getting the net to scoop up the final walleye to reach your limit, the outdoors was a refuge from all the uncertainty.

With campgrounds experiencing record numbers and hunting and fishing licenses sales on the rise there were more people utilizing the natural resources of South Dakota than ever before. Conservation Officers were there ensuring the safety of the users and the responsible use of the resources like they have been doing since the early 1900s. The men and women who make up the Conservation Officer ranks were experiencing many of the same challenges that everyone else was facing in their personal and professional lives. There were schedules to balance, family needs to attend to and yet, they continued to go to work



everyday answering the call to serve and protect. Cautionary steps were taken early on to make sure that both the public and the officers themselves were protected. With those steps in place, Conservation Officers were on the water keeping everyone safe. They were traveling the back roads patrolling for poachers, and they were walking the shorelines checking fishermen. Many Conservation Officers were able to visit with men and women who decided to reconnect with the outdoors for the first time in many years. They did all of this with highest degree of professionalism.

WHAT'S NEW: REORGANIZATION

In the summer of 2020, the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks conducted a reorganization that incorporated Wildlife Conservation Offices in the Wildlife Division and Park Rangers in the Parks Division. A new section was created bringing all of Game, Fish and Parks law enforcement officers under one, centralized structure. The Law Enforcement Section officially began in August of 2020.

The change brought on a new set of challenges in the department. Officers had new responsibilities,

new supervisors and there was a lot of uncertainty headed into the fall and in preparation for the following summer. Merging two different divisions, two different budgets, and two different law enforcement strategies into one section was not an easy task. Lots of work and preparation went into this transition in anticipation for the summer months and the busy camping season. Plans were coordinated between Conservation Officer supervisors and park managers to make sure adequate coverage was going to be

available to keep our park users safe and secure.

Conservation Officers wear many different hats in the agency and as we continue advancing the mission of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, our Conservation Officers will be there to serve and protect our users, to do everything we can to connect them to the outdoors and to do our part in managing the resources for future generations.



CASE FEATURE: DEER BAITING

Wildlife Conservation Officers from South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks conducted an investigation in central South Dakota into the illegal take of deer and use of bait for big game hunting. The investigation started in 2017 from a TIPs call from an anonymous source that contacted a local law enforcement agency which, in turn, contacted GFP law enforcement. The multi-year investigation ended in 2020 with the adjudication of four people, 2 men from South Dakota and 2 men from Wisconsin. During the investigation, GFP officers documented 41 bait sites that were used for baiting deer for illegal hunting. The investigation resulted in fines, civil penalties, revocations, and forfeitures, including an illegally taken 164-inch Boone and Crocket Whitetail Deer.



SOUTH DAKOTA RESIDENT DEFENDANT 1

3 COUNTS | Unlawful Possession of Big Game
5 YEARS | Hunting Revocation

5 YEARS | Prohibition of Placing Bait Year Round
FORFEITURE OF THE FOLLOWING TO GFP

- 3 Crossbows
- 1 Night Vision Scope
- 1 Rangefinder
- 2 Trail Cameras
- Multiple Arrows
- 1 Hunting Knife
- Crossbow Parts

FINES | \$3,259

CIVIL PENALTIES | \$10,000

JAIL | 90 Days/90 days suspended

PROBATION | 36 Months

SOUTH DAKOTA RESIDENT DEFENDANT 2

2 COUNTS | Use of Bait Station for Big Game
FINES | \$320

WISCONSIN RESIDENT DEFENDANT 1

1 COUNT | Use of Bait Station for Big Game
FINES | \$162

WISCONSIN RESIDENT DEFENDANT 2

1 COUNT | Use of Bait Station for Big Game
FINES | \$162

TOTAL

5 YEARS hunting revocation
5 YEARS prohibition of placing bait year round
FINES/CIVIL PENALTIES | \$13,904
JAIL | 90 days/90 days suspended
PROBATION | 36 months

YOUTH DUCK HUNT

Every year many of our Conservation Officers take a weekend off from patrolling the backroads to spend time organizing and planning hunts. Deer, pheasant, turkey and waterfowl hunts take place annually in many locations across the state. The goal of these hunts is to get our youth active and involved in being outdoors. We often partner with other organizations such as Pheasants Forever, Delta Waterfowl and more. While it is certainly an early morning, there is no doubt that all involved in the Youth Duck Hunt had an enjoyable experience.



CASE FEATURE: OUT-OF-STATE HUNTER

During the summer of 2018, Conservation Officers observed a Florida-plated vehicle that was consistently parked at a residence in Lemmon, SD. Through conversations with people in the community, Conservation Officers believed this individual had been hunting in SD. Conservation Officers conducted a vehicle registration check on the Florida-plated vehicle and found it was registered to an individual out of Florida. A search of the South Dakota Game Fish and Parks license database found that the individual was listed as a resident and had purchased a spring turkey license, archery spring turkey license, black hills spring turkey license, archery deer, combination license, and a west river deer license in 2018. This individual had also applied and was unsuccessful in the lottery for a Muzzleloader deer and antelope license in 2018.

With Ellsworth Airforce Base and numerous colleges located in the Black Hills area, it is not uncommon for Conservation Officers to encounter individuals from other states who have legally obtained resident licenses. Military personal and college students from out of state are allowed to purchase resident

licenses in the state of South Dakota provided they meet certain requirements. After a few quick checks, Conservation Officers learned this individual was not currently in the military nor was he a full-time student at any of our area colleges.

An initial investigation uncovered violations of residency requirements and possibly fraudulent license violations. A search on social media found possible failure-to-tag violations, over limit on turkeys, and elk hunting violations.

Officers secured a search warrant for the place where he was staying, his cell phone, and his vehicle. Several officers served the search warrant and conducted an interview with the individual. Through the search and interview, officers learned that the individual did not tag any of his turkeys, hunted deer over bait, failed to tag his deer, and harvested more turkeys than he had tags. The elk was legally harvested through the elk reduction efforts in Wind Cave National park. Officers also learned he was recently inviting other hunters to hunt because he had plenty of tags.

This individual was charged with eight

SUSPECT WAS CHARGED AND SENTENCED

8 COUNTS | Unlawful Possession of Big Game

7 COUNTS | Failure to Tag Big Game

2 COUNTS | No License for Turkey

15 COUNTS | Fraud License

CRIMINAL FINES | \$3,926

CIVIL PENALTIES | \$3,600

HUNTING REVOCATION | 5 years

counts of unlawful possession of big game, seven counts of failure to tag big game, two counts of no license for turkey and 15 counts of fraud license. A plea deal was reached, and the individual plead guilty to 12 of the class one misdemeanors with the remaining charges being dismissed. He was ordered to pay \$3,926 in criminal fines, \$3,600 in civil penalties, and had his hunting privileges revoked in South Dakota for five years. Through the plea deal the individual also forfeited two of his firearms, illegally harvested mule deer, whitetail deer, numerous turkey beards, meat and legs, and camera equipment used to film his hunts.



LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS

Road Checks

Outdoor enthusiasts who have spent time hunting and fishing in South Dakota have likely gone through a game or fish road check at some point in their travels. Road checks are authorized by law and play an important role in the management and protection of our wildlife and fisheries resources. Generally speaking, Conservation Officers inspect and count any game or fish in possession at a road check to determine compliance with laws and regulations. These operations ensure folks are not taking more than their fair share of a public resource. In 2020, Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) conducted 5 road checks across South Dakota. Approximately 170 of the vehicles screened were inspected and 27 violations were detected.

Aquatic Invasive Species

GFP has significantly increased efforts to effectively manage and slow the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), particularly zebra mussels, throughout the state. Conservation

Officers and Aquatics staff continue to work diligently to slow the spread of AIS. Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination Stations (WIDS) were conducted across the state to reach the boaters traveling to and from lakes. Through these efforts Conservation Officers issued 262 citations for AIS violations.

Saturation Patrols

Conservation officers also conducted numerous other operations to improve compliance with hunting, fishing and boating laws. These include saturation patrols on land and water, where multiple officers will patrol in the same general area. At times, a pilot and an officer in an airplane will communicate with the officers below. There were over a dozen saturations conducted across the state in 2020 which led to violations ranging from boating under the influence to the use of artificial light for hunting.

Facsimile Operations

GFP routinely receives complaints from landowners and rural residents

during the hunting seasons concerning individuals who trespass, shoot from vehicles, shoot big game from the road, and shoot too close to homes or livestock. Officers will sometimes conduct wildlife facsimile operations to deter this illegal activity. These operations are highly controlled and are limited to site-specific areas with a documented history of hunting violations or unsafe hunting practices. In many cases, the request comes directly from the landowner. Contrary to some opinions, the use of wildlife replicas is not entrapment. Entrapment occurs when the government provides both the opportunity to violate the law as well as the encouragement to violate the law. GFP does not provide the encouragement to violate the law in these operations. The person must be predisposed to break the law, and the decision to shoot is made knowingly, willingly, and voluntarily by the violator. Five facsimile operations were conducted across the state in 2020 which led to 3 violations for shooting from the road.



OPERATION DRY WATER

Operation Dry Water (ODW) is a year-round boating under the influence awareness and enforcement campaign. The mission of ODW is to reduce the number of alcohol- and drug-related accidents and fatalities through increased recreational boater awareness and by fostering a stronger and more visible deterrent to alcohol use on the water.

Every year since 2009 South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Conservation Officers (COs) have participated in this nation-wide effort to make our lakes and rivers safer for everyone and encourage responsible use of our waterways. Every summer a three-day weekend is chosen where COs increase their enforcement efforts on random waterbodies throughout the state. Operation Dry Water's heightened awareness and enforcement three-day weekend takes place annually around the July Fourth weekend. This is a busy boating weekend across the nation and officers want to contact as many boaters as possible.

The purpose of the enhanced enforcement component of the Operation Dry Water campaign is to deter boaters from boating under the influence of drugs or alcohol. When boaters chose to boat impaired they are endangering not only themselves but the many other boaters on the water as well.

With alcohol use remaining the leading contributing factor in recreational boater deaths, the primary focus of the ODW campaign and of those who support it is to change the cultural acceptance of drinking and boating and help boaters have safe and fun recreational boating experiences. South Dakota COs contact as many boaters as possible to spread this message of responsible boat operation!



2020 OPERATION DRY WATER STATS

Region	Officers	Vessels	Boaters	Citations	Warning	BUI	Non-Boat Violations	Lakes
1	13	300	466	17	12	1	2	Angostura, Pactola, Sheridan, Orman, Shadehill, Iron Creek Lake
2	12	106	378	2	19	1	4	Lake Oahe, Lake Sharpe, Lake Francis Case
3	20	336	1163	19	50	5	8	Lower Missouri River, Lewis & Clark Lake, McCook, Marindahl, Lake Mitchell, Lake Vermillion, Byron, West Oakwood, Madison, Brandt, Thompson
4	12	109	426	8	70	1	2	Richmond, Mina, Pickerel, Poinsett, Cochrane, Kampeska, Big Stone, Dry 2
Total	57	851	2433	46	151	8	16	34 Operations/Patrols in 2020

TURN IN POACHERS (TIPS) PROGRAM



The Turn-In-Poachers (TIPs) program is a partnership between South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks (GFP) and the non-profit organization, Wildlife Protection, Inc. This

joint venture was born out of a desire for South Dakota's Sportsmen to "police" their own. With approximately 70 Conservation Officers called upon to cover about 75,000 square miles of land and 1,200 square miles of water in South Dakota, it is evident that they can't be everywhere all the time. Most times, the best witnesses are the landowners and resource users themselves. So, in an effort to provide easy and convenient ways to report violations, TIPs has become a core component of GFP's Law Enforcement efforts.

Through TIPs, a 24 hour, seven day a week toll free number, 1-888-OVERBAG (683-7224), has been set up to field reports from the public regarding hunting, fishing, and trapping violations. Information may also be provided through a link to the GFP's website. Just like those calling in on the telephone, the information entered in this form may be reported by those who wish to remain anonymous. A wildlife violation may be reported through the website at gfp.sd.gov/tips.

This partnership between government and the private sector allows those who provide information to be compensated for their information. Since the inception of the program in 1984, over \$189,000 in rewards has been paid out to people who observe and report violations. The funding for this program comes from a variety of areas; however, one of the most popular is by sportsmen themselves.

The TIPs year runs from July 1 through June 30. The TIPs year 2020 stats are now being calculated and are typically sent out in August. During the 2019 TIPs year (which began in July 1, 2019 and ended on June 30, 2020) 318 investigations and 174 arrests could be directly attributed to

TIPs Program Totals for TIPs Year 2019

318 INVESTIGATIONS
174 ARRESTS
\$42,304 FINES
\$48,225 LIQUIDATED CIVIL DAMAGES
280 DAYS OF JAIL (280 days suspended)
\$6,650 REWARDS PAID

TIPs Program Totals 1984 to June 30, 2020

12,535 INVESTIGATIONS
4,718 ARRESTS
\$892,981 FINES
\$815,425 LIQUIDATED CIVIL DAMAGES
43,009 DAYS OF JAIL (39,365 days suspended)
\$189,730 REWARDS PAID

information provided through the program. From this information, violators were fined \$42,304 and required to pay \$48,225 in civil damages. Judges sentenced violators to 280 days in jail for their crimes (280 days were suspended). TIPs paid out \$6,650 in rewards.

This has been a year like none before, and we were all curious what impact the COVID-19 pandemic would have on sportsmen and women, hunter/angler participation, and wildlife violations in general. It is interesting; and it makes sense that the shutdown of typical events and opportunities due to the possible spread of the virus did not apply to the outdoors of South Dakota. Many sportsman and women enjoyed the outdoors as usual, and the pandemic motivated many others to dust-off their old fishing and hunting gear and participate in one of the few activities unimpacted by the virus. Having this many hunters/anglers in the field produced a consistent number of calls reporting wildlife violations.

For over 30 years, the South Dakota Turn-In-Poachers program has been a shining example of what can be done to protect a public trust resource when government, private industry, sportsmen and the general public come together to address a common problem.

PROJECT DAKOTA FLYER

This investigation was an undercover operation focused on the unlawful take and trafficking of federally protected birds, primarily hawks, owls and eagles.

Project Dakota Flyer resulted in criminal charges, both felonies and misdemeanors, against 38 individuals.

Penalties to date include:

- » \$230,000 in fines and restitution
- » 89 months in custody
- » 210 months probation/supervised release



1.888.OVERBAG | TIPS.SD.GOV

CONSERVATION OFFICER AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Every year GFP conservation officers, supervisors and administrative staff receive awards in recognition of their efforts toward wildlife law enforcement and management.



JOSH CARR

District Conservation Officer Supervisor in Fort Pierre, received the Officer of the Year Award from the Association of Midwest Association of Fish and Game Law Enforcement Officers for his outstanding efforts in law enforcement.



CODY SYMENS

Conservation Officer in Madison, received the Officer of the Year Award from the National Wild Turkey Federation for his efforts in connecting youth with the outdoors and support of conservation efforts.



ADAM GEIGLE

District Conservation Officer Supervisor in Rapid City, received the Brook Brown Boating Safety Officer of the Year Award from the National Association of Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) for his efforts with boating safety.



MATT TALBERT

Conservation Officer in Salem, received the Officer of the Year Award from the South Dakota Conservation Officers Association for his outstanding efforts.



CHRIS DEKKER, ADAM GEIGLE, JEFF EDWARDS, AND ROSS FEES (NOT PICTURED)

The central district of Region 1 received the Team Excellence Award from the United States Forest Service (USFS) for their work and partnership with the USFS in the Black Hills.

2020 CONSERVATION OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Award Presented Annually by Shikar–Safari Club International



ERIC VOIGT

Each year, Shikar-Safari Club International selects an outstanding Conservation Officer in each of the 50 states based on their exemplary performance in the areas of wildlife protection, wildlife law enforcement, and implementation of important wildlife conservation programs.

South Dakota's 2020 Recipient is Ipswich Conservation Officer Eric Voigt.

Eric was recognized for his outstanding community involvement, his dedication to the protection of South Dakota's natural resources and his commitment to carrying out the mission of South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks.

2020 STATEWIDE VIOLATION STATISTICS

HUNTING VIOLATIONS = 518

56 | Artificial Light/Night Vision
41 | Big Game - Wrong Unit
39 | Big Game - Hunting on Highway
39 | Big Game - No License
27 | Protected Bird - Hunt or Possess
27 | Waterfowl - Unplugged Shotgun
24 | Big Game - Closed Season
24 | Shooting from a Motor Vehicle
22 | Hunting within 660 Feet of Dwelling/Livestock
15 | Big Game - Unlawful Possession
13 | Small Game - Wrong Unit
11 | Big Game - Failure to Tag
11 | Small Game - Right of Way Restriction
11 | Waterfowl - No Federal Stamp
11 | Waterfowl - No License
10 | Big Game - Bait Station/Electronic Call Prohibited
10 | Big Game - Violate Conditions of License
10 | Waterfowl - Overlimit
9 | Small Game - Closed Season
9 | Small Game - Hunt Before/After Legal Hours
8 | Gun Protruding from Vehicle
8 | Minor Hunting without Adult Supervision
7 | Game Bird Transportation/Packaging Requirements
7 | Waterfowl - Closed Season
5 | Small Game - Overlimit
4 | Big Game - No Fluorescent Orange
4 | Big Game - Transport without Sex/Species ID
4 | Game Birds - Illegal Transport by Common Carrier
4 | Shooting Preserve - Failure to Tag Birds
4 | Small Game - No License
4 | Small Game - Unlawful Possession
4 | Waterfowl - Hunt Before/After Legal Hours
3 | Artificial Light Prohibited After 10 p.m.
3 | Big Game - Improper Tagging
3 | Protected Game - Unlawful Possession
3 | Shooting Preserve - Insufficient Release
2 | Big Game - Use of Salt Lick to Attract
2 | Dove Hunting within 50 Yards of Highway
2 | Shooting Preserve - Records Violation
2 | Small Game - Unplugged Shotgun
2 | Small Game - Violate Conditions of License
2 | Turkey - No License
2 | Waterfowl - Right of Way Restriction
2 | Waterfowl - Unlawful Possession
1 | Big Game - Exceed Max Number Cartridges
1 | Big Game - Ineligible Application for License
1 | Big Game - Unlicensed Armed Accompaniment
1 | Hunt within 660 Feet of Dwelling/Livestock - Posted

1 | Hunting from Snowmobile
1 | Turkey - Overlimit
1 | Turkey - Violate Conditions of License
1 | Waterfowl - Lead Shot

MISC VIOLATIONS = 659

141 | License - Fraud to Obtain
87 | Alcohol - Possession by Minor
83 | Trespass - Hunting
39 | Drugs - Use or Possession of Paraphernalia
37 | Driving Off Roads Prohibited
27 | Drugs - Possession of Marijuana - 2 Ounces or Less
26 | Wanton Waste of Game
20 | Littering Prohibited
15 | Driving Under the Influence - Misdemeanor
14 | Drugs - Possession of Controlled Substance
13 | Alcohol - Open Container
12 | Disorderly Conduct
12 | Obstructing Law Enforcement Officer
11 | Trespass - Fishing
10 | License - Minimum Residency Required
10 | Trespass - Criminal
7 | Drugs - Ingest Intoxicant Other Than Alcohol
7 | Unauthorized Land Use/Entry on Posted Land
6 | License - Not in Possession
6 | Resisting Arrest
4 | Disturbing Wildlife Prohibited
4 | Interference with Lawful Hunting
4 | License - No Migratory Bird Certification
4 | Littering from Vehicle
4 | Possess Loaded Firearm While Intoxicated
4 | Unauthorized Fire/Public Land
3 | Drugs - Ingestion of a Controlled Substance
3 | Impersonation to Deceive Officer
3 | License - Lending
3 | Simple Assault Against Law Enforcement
3 | Traffic Wreckless Driving
3 | Use of Vehicle/Boat to Disturb or Chase
2 | Aggravated Assault Against Law Enforcement
2 | Aquatic Invasive Species - Illegal Possession/Sale/
Transport
2 | Eluding
2 | Habitual Offender - Prior Felony
2 | License - Apply/Purchase Big Game When Ineligible
2 | License - Fish Under Revocation
2 | License - Purchase/Apply Under Revocation -
Fishing
2 | Petty Theft 2nd Degree - \$400 or Less
2 | Reckless Discharge of a Firearm/Bow
2 | Simple Assault

- 2 | Vandalism - \$400 Less - 3rd Degree
- 1 | Aggravated Assault
- 1 | Drugs - Possession of Marijuana - More than 2 Ounces
- 1 | Dumping Chemicals/Refuse into Game Fish Waters
- 1 | Eluding - Vessel
- 1 | Enter Boundary Water without SD License
- 1 | Failure to Stop at Signal of Officer
- 1 | Habitual Offender - 3+ Felonies
- 1 | Manufacture, Distribute, or Possess Controlled Substance
- 1 | Possess Altered Drivers License
- 1 | Receiving Stolen Property
- 1 | Taxidermy - No License
- 1 | Trespass - Trapping

FISHING VIOLATIONS = 254

- 157 | Fishing without License
- 37 | Over Limit of Fish
- 24 | Length Limit Violation
- 17 | Too Many Lines
- 5 | Illegal Fishing Method
- 4 | Unattended Lines
- 2 | Aquatic Invasive Species - Fish and Bait Transportation Restrictions
- 2 | Aquatic Invasive Species - Illegal Possession/Transport
- 2 | Unlawful Possession - Fish
- 1 | Bait Dealer - Records Required
- 1 | Paddlefish Processing and Transportation Restrictions
- 1 | Unlawful Possession of Fish on the Water
- 1 | Wanton Waste of Fish

PARK AND PUBLIC LAND VIOLATIONS = 158

- 31 | Failure to Have Park Entrance License
- 28 | Nontoxic Shot Areas for Small Game
- 25 | Glass Containers Prohibited
- 12 | Snowmobile - No Valid License
- 11 | Limitation on Tree Stands/Platforms/Blinds
- 9 | Alcohol - Possession at Lake Alvin Swim Beach
- 6 | Operating Vehicles on School and Public Land
- 5 | Misc. Park Violations
- 4 | Escape - 1st Degree
- 4 | Jumping/Diving Prohibited
- 3 | Pet Prohibitions
- 3 | Traffic - Speeding in Park/Recreation Area
- 2 | Destruction or Removal of Natural Features

- 2 | Hunting Guide Activities Barred from Certain State Lands
- 2 | Lead Shot Target Shooting on Public Lands
- 2 | Leaving Property on Department Land
- 2 | Traffic - Exhibition Driving in Park/Recreation Area
- 1 | Checkout Times Enforced
- 1 | Failure to Obey Traffic Signs in Park/Recreation Area
- 1 | Limitation on Trail Cameras
- 1 | Loud Speakers Prohibited - Disturbance Prohibited
- 1 | Restrictions on Firearms and Bows
- 1 | Snowmobile - Reckless Operations
- 1 | Time Restriction - Use of State Park System

FURBEARER VIOLATIONS = 20

- 4 | Exposed Bait Prohibited
- 3 | Prohibited Method of Hunting Furbearer
- 3 | Trap Checking Required
- 2 | Furbearer - Hunt During Closed Season
- 2 | Furbearer - No License
- 2 | Unlawful Possession - Furbearer
- 1 | Failure to Register Bobcat Within 5 Days
- 1 | Furbearer - Trap Without License
- 1 | Possess Wild Animal - Failure to Notify
- 1 | Snare Restrictions

WATERCRAFT VIOLATIONS = 521

- 195 | Aquatic Invasive Species - Conveyance Removal Restrictions
- 99 | PFD - Insufficient Number
- 94 | Aquatic Invasive Species - Watercraft Restrictions
- 31 | Careless Operation
- 19 | Operate Vessel Under Influence
- 16 | Operate Vessel in Violation of Posted Waters
- 16 | Operate Vessel Without Lights
- 15 | PWC - Greater Than No Wake Within 150 Feet
- 14 | PFD - Not Wearing on Personal Watercraft
- 7 | Reckless/Negligent Operation of Vessel
- 4 | PFD - Use Required (Child Under 7)
- 2 | Aquatic Invasive Species - Watercraft Inspections
- 2 | Boat Accident - Failure to Report
- 2 | PWC - Operate in Unreasonable Manner
- 2 | Water Skiing - No Observer or Mirror
- 1 | Aquatic Invasive Species - Failure to Comply with Inspection
- 1 | Aquatic Invasive Species - Conveyance Placement Restrictions
- 1 | Illegal Operation/Tampering with Watercraft

PFD = Personal Floatation Device

PWC = Personal Watercraft

2020 STATEWIDE VIOLATION STATISTICS

VIOLATION TOTALS BY ACTIVITY

Hunting	518
Fishing	254
Furbearer	20
Watercraft	521
Parks and Public Land	158
Miscellaneous	659
TOTAL	2,130

WRITTEN WARNINGS BY ACTIVITY

Boating	349
Hunting	323
Miscellaneous	219
Fishing	109
Parks	21
Furbearer	12
Shooting Preserve	9
Trapping - Furbearer	4
Taxidermist	1
TOTAL	1,035

SUSPENSIONS

Hunting	256
Fishing	152
Trapping	9
TOTAL	417

FINES AND COSTS

Fines assessed	\$148,729
Fines suspended	\$301
Actual fines assessed	\$148,428
Costs assessed	\$118,193
Costs suspended	\$0
Actual costs assessed	\$118,193
ACTUAL FINES & COSTS ASSESSED	\$266,622

JAIL TIME - DAYS

Jail time assessed	9,988
Jail time suspended	8,106
ACTUAL JAIL TIME SERVED	1,882

PROBATION - MONTHS

Probation	210
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CIVIL DAMAGES ASSESSED

Big Game	\$106,700
Fish	\$2,700
Furbearer	\$0
Small Game/Waterfowl	\$600
TOTAL	\$107,000



2020 STATEWIDE CONTACT STATISTICS

FIELD CONTACT TOTALS

Anglers – nonresident	5,982
Anglers – resident	14,673
Hunters – nonresident	3,877
Hunters – resident	7,302
Parks – nonresident	384
Parks – resident	1,136
Trappers – nonresident	3
Trappers – resident	122
TOTAL	33,479

LAW ENFORCEMENT EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Presentations to groups	67
School programs	32
HuntSAFE classes	18
Radio	340
TV	19
Newspaper articles	113
CrimeNtel Entries	16
TOTAL	605

LANDOWNER ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE

Trespass	153
Shooting too close to dwellings/ livestock (660 feet)	72
Spotlighting	62
Miscellaneous	170
TOTAL	457

INSPECTION TOTALS

Watercraft	5,931
Snowmobile	827
Private Shooting Preserve	221
Taxidermist	86
Bait Dealers	32
Public Storage	20
Fur Dealers	7
Captive Game Bird	3
Private Fish Hatchery	1
TOTAL	7,128



IN MEMORIAM

ARLO ARTHUR HAASE

JANUARY 27, 1941 – APRIL 9, 2020



Arlo Arthur Haase was born on January 27, 1941, in Webster, SD, to Fred and Hazel (Peterson) Haase. He grew up in the Webster area and graduated from Webster

High School in 1959. Arlo graduated from South Dakota State University in 1964 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Science.

On August 11, 1962, Arlo married his high school sweetheart, Judy Sichmeller. He began his career as a South Dakota Conservation Officer in 1964 with his first duty station being Plankinton, SD. In 1970, Arlo transferred to Milbank and retired in 2000. Arlo was instrumental in the development of the South Dakota Conservation Officer's Association and was an active member even after he retired. A highlight for Arlo was the retired game warden gatherings and sharing stories with longtime friends. He also attended several of the National Wildlife Enforcement Officer Association conventions around the United States and Canada.

Arlo loved the outdoors and was an avid hunter, trapper, and fisherman. Fishing with friends was one of his favorite pastimes, both on the ice and open water. Goose hunting with friends was also very high on the list! Other hobbies included trap shooting and wood working. Arlo's passion for wildlife and the outdoors was displayed through his involvement with local sportsman's clubs. One of his favorite job duties was the weekly KMSD radio program every Friday.

BRUCE HARRIS

MARCH 12, 1924 – MARCH 8, 2021



Bruce Kent Harris was born on March 12, 1924, to Dr. Herschel and Alice (Jones) Harris in Wilmot, SD. He attended Wilmot School, and upon his graduation, he attended North

Dakota State University for one year before being drafted into the service. Bruce joined the Navy as a Pharmacist's Mate 3rd Class in 1943. He worked in Naval Hospitals in New Guinea and the Philippines. While there he found an interest in the beautiful butterflies. He mounted and sent many home to his mother. After serving in the Navy for 32 months, 21 overseas, he was honorably discharged in March of 1946.

Bruce attended Quinney College of Natural Resources in Logan, Utah, earning a degree in Biology and Botany. He worked in various positions for Game and Fish Departments in California, New Mexico and South Dakota. He preferred the title of Conservation Officer. All of his time outside allowed him to pursue a lifelong hobby of bird watching. He could identify many birds just by their calls.

He was a member of the South Dakota Ornithologists Union. Many of his bird lists are recorded in the book "The Birds of South Dakota." Bruce loved reading, tennis, fishing, hunting, bird watching and spending time at the cottage on Big Stone Lake.

Bruce married Lavina Hove on March 31, 1956, in Newhall, CA. They had three children, Gordon, Mark and Janet.

RICHARD “DICK” MARKO

JULY 11, 1936 – NOVEMBER 24, 2020



Richard “Dick” Marko, son of William “Bill” and Margaret (Mullner) Marko, was born July 11, 1936, in Westport, SD. He was raised on the family farm with three brothers and three sisters.

Dick attended and graduated from Westport High School.

Dick was united in marriage to Ione Williams on May 31, 1956. The couple made Aberdeen their home, where Dick began working for Jewett Drug. In 1964, Dick and Ione moved to Ipswich, SD and he began what would become a 30-year career with the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish, and Parks. Dick became Sheriff of Edmunds County in 1994 and served until 1998.

He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, United Commercial Travelers, Modern Woodmen, and the Peace Officers Association. In his spare time, Dick enjoyed hunting, a good game of cards, and socializing with family and friends.

GERALD “GERRY” HEISMAYER

OCTOBER 20, 1946 – JUNE 22, 2020



Gerry Heismeyer was born on October 20, 1946, in Estelline, SD to Fred and Eleanor (Beck) Heismeyer. His early education was completed in Estelline, beginning in a country school and ending in his graduation from

Estelline High School in 1964. Following his high school graduation he served four years in the U.S. Air Force, serving in California, Texas and Waikanai, Japan. Gerry enrolled at South Dakota State University in September of 1968 and completed both his Bachelors and Masters degrees in Wildlife Sciences.

On June 6, 1964, Gerry married Beatrice McClard in Estelline. They celebrated their 56th anniversary on June 6th. They have two children: Kimberlee and Christopher.

Following his MS graduation in 1974 he accepted a position in Plankinton, SD as Conservation Officer with the SD Game, Fish and Parks and worked his entire career with GFP including six years as an Assistant Regional Supervisor in the Chamberlain, SD field office.

Gerry joined the SD Army National Guard in 1976 as an instructor of the NCO Academy, beginning in Mitchell, SD and then moving with the Academy to Fort Meade, Sturgis, SD. He retired from the Guard in November of 1996 as the NCOIC at the rank of Command Sergeant Major.



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