



# 2018 RINGNECK OUTLOOK

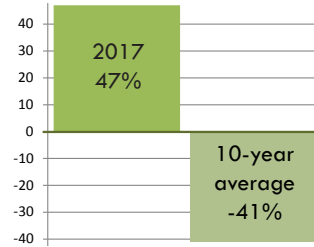
OCTOBER 20 | TRADITIONAL PHEASANT SEASON OPENS

## STATEWIDE PHEASANTS PER MILE

- 2018: 2.47
- 2017: 1.68
- 10 YEAR AVERAGE: 4.20



## DIFFERENCE OF 2018 PHEASANTS PER MILE STATEWIDE



## RESULTS OF PHEASANT BROOD SURVEYS BY CITY AREAS

CITY AREA	PHEASANTS PER MILE			CHANGE FROM	
	2018 SURVEY	2017 SURVEY	10 YEAR AVERAGE	2017 SURVEY	10 YEAR AVERAGE
CHAMBERLAIN	5.29	4.05	10.51	31%	-50%
WINNER	2.71	2.52	6.41	7%	-58%
PIERRE	3.72	3.13	8.28	19%	-55%
MOBRIDGE	2.69	2.10	6.20	28%	-57%
ABERDEEN	1.35	1.02	3.79	32%	-64%
HURON	3.61	1.85	4.63	95%	-22%
MITCHELL	4.28	2.52	4.25	66%	1%
YANKTON	1.15	0.83	1.30	38%	-11%
SIOUX FALLS	1.39	0.80	1.42	73%	-3%
BROOKINGS	1.63	0.80	1.89	104%	-14%
WATERTOWN	1.55	0.81	2.29	91%	-32%
SISSETON	1.23	0.40	1.22	210%	1%
WESTERN SD	1.30	1.37	2.46	-5%	-47%

## 2018 SOUTH DAKOTA PHEASANT SURVEY RESULTS

According to the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP), this year's pheasant brood survey shows a 47 percent increase over last year. The 2018 statewide pheasants-per-mile (PPM) index is 2.47, up from the 2017 index of 1.68.

"A substantial increase in the pheasants-per-mile index is an exciting prospect for South Dakota's 100th pheasant hunting season this fall," stated Kelly Hepler, GFP Secretary. "Weather conditions continue to play a significant role when it comes to bird numbers and better weather helped this year with the average pheasant brood size increasing 22 percent over last year."

From late July through mid-August, GFP surveyed 110, thirty-mile routes across the state's pheasant range to estimate pheasant production and calculate the PPM index. The survey is not a population estimate, but rather compares the number of pheasants observed on the routes and establishes trend information. Statewide, 85 of the 110 survey routes had a higher PPM than 2017.

"We are pleased to see pheasant numbers improve across the state; particularly in the far eastern part of the state where hunters will have more opportunities to harvest birds than in recent years," stated Hepler. "The full report provides an overview of upland habitat; which remains a concern for all wildlife across the state. Just as changes in landscape-level habitat conditions have produced peaks and valleys in the pheasant population for 100 years, habitat will again be the key to preserving pheasant hunting for another century."

The Walk-in Area (WIA) program added 39,000 new acres in addition to 8,000 new acres last year. With 1.1 million acres of public hunting land within the heart of South Dakota's pheasant range, great opportunities remain for public access to pheasant hunting. Hepler said hunters should notice far fewer disturbed CRP fields compared to last year when emergency haying and grazing was authorized in response to severe drought conditions.

The annual hunting atlas and a web-based interactive map of public lands and private lands leased for public hunting can be found at [gfp.sd.gov/hunting-areas](http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting-areas). In addition to printed and interactive maps, hunters can utilize GPS downloads and smartphone applications to locate public hunting lands throughout the state. Hunters are again asked to hunt safely and ethically, respect private landowners and those public hunting areas scattered across the state.

"Challenges exist to maintain habitat, desirable pheasant population levels, and to recruit a new generation of hunters to preserve this truly special sport of pheasant hunting. Take time this fall to celebrate the hunt, the sense of community and comradery while appreciating how deeply rooted the tradition of pheasant hunting has been for the last 100 years," concluded Hepler.

South Dakota's traditional statewide pheasant hunting season opens on Saturday, Oct. 20, 2018, and runs through Jan. 6, 2019.