



2018 YEAR IN REVIEW

SOUTH DAKOTA GAME, FISH AND PARKS

MISSION

We provide sustainable outdoor recreational opportunities through responsible management of our state's parks, fisheries and wildlife by fostering partnerships, cultivating stewardship and safely connecting people with the outdoors.

VISION

We will conserve our state's outdoor heritage to enhance the quality of life for current and future generations.

EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

486 PERMANENT STAFF MEMBERS. 513 SEASONAL WORKERS. 174 SUMMER INTERNS. 450+ VOLUNTEERS.

Each year our staff work tirelessly to collaborate across department lines, with local, state and national partners along with private landowners. Through this they accomplish new priorities and tackle other challenges without hesitation or complaint.

SOUTH DAKOTA PARKS BY THE NUMBERS

The South Dakota State Park system includes 13 state parks, 43 recreation areas, 5 nature areas, 1 historic prairie, 69 lakeside use area and 10 marina/resorts. In addition, the Division of Parks and Recreation manages the 114-mile Mickelson Trail, South Dakota's Snowmobile Trail Program, and maintains 240 public water access areas.

PUBLIC HUNTING GROUND BY THE NUMBERS

South Dakota has approximately 730 Game Production Areas, totaling more than 282,000 acres. Over 1.28 million acres of privately owned lands are enrolled in the Walk-In Area program. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (C.R.E.P.) lands are owned by private individuals who have enrolled over 80,000 acres in a lease agreement to provide public hunting and fishing access. Controlled Hunting Access Program includes 23,000 acres of privately owned lands, leased primarily for big game hunting. Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access Program includes over 34,000 acres of private land, leased for public hunting access primarily for field waterfowl hunting. GFP also leases public hunting and fishing access to 16,000 acres of Cooperative Management Areas.

RESOURCES FOR RECREATION

16 Welcome Centers	4,417 Campsites	93 Playgrounds	50 Beaches
9 Regional Offices	223 Camping Cabins	121 Comfort Stations	349 Miles of Trails
3 Fish Hatcheries	2 Modern Cabins	49 Fishing Docks	328 Miles of Roads
2 Outdoor Campuses	7 Lodges	50 Fish Cleaning Stations	155 Mile Canoe/Kayak Trail
83 Dams	153 Picnic Shelters	347 Boat Ramps	1,518 Miles of Snowmobile Trails

NEW IN 2018

- Effective July 1, 2018, GFP offers an apprentice deer license, which takes the place of the youth deer license. The only addition to the license is a new one-time offer to adult first-time hunters. This license is a powerful recruitment tool that allows new adult hunters who did not grow up hunting to try the sport before going through their first draw. Just like the original youth deer season, the season dates were Sept. 8, 2018 - Jan. 1, 2019.
- GFP has been looking for a way to bolster hunter and angler recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) efforts in our state. While our state has excelled at providing important mentorship and programming opportunities for youth, we have seen almost a total lack of adult mentorship opportunities. In order to help fill that void, GFP partnered with Powderhook, a free app that connects adults who are new to hunting and fishing with mentors in their communities. The app enables novices to ask hunting and fishing advice from digital mentors, find places to hunt, fish, or shoot, and notifies them when there are local outdoor events.
- With a change to our preference point system, hunters with higher preference point totals now receive more of a statistical advantage during big-game license drawings. Applicants receive a cubed total of points into every drawing. This action is intended to increase the drawing odds of applicants with a greater number of preference while still allowing applicants with fewer preference points a chance to draw a limited license. The number of preference points plus one for the current year application are cubed to determine the number of times each applicant name is entered into the drawing. The drawing pools remain unchanged.
- The Custer State Park app is a new interpretive tool that allows visitors to go on self-guided tours of the park and learn more about its history through photos, video and audio. The app has three tours, the Wildlife Loop Tour, the Badger Clark Tour and the Legion Lake Fire Tour, each telling a story while taking visitors throughout the park's 71,000 acres. The app also has the potential to provide real-time notifications in case of emergencies, as well as information on all four resort complexes, including food menus.
- This past year, and going forward in 2019 South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks is celebrating 100 Years of Outdoor Tradition. In 1918, South Dakota established its' first pheasant hunting season which was held in Spink County in 1919. Also, in 1919, Custer State Park was named the first official state park.
- Since April, the department has held four user-based forums: a fish and wildlife resources forum, a shooting preserve operator's forum, a nature and wildlife forum which included individuals from the birding, photography, nature, kayaking and canoeing communities and an agriculture industry leaders forum held at SD Corn in Sioux Falls. These discussions have been a first of their kind. They focused on the continuation of open conversations regarding sustainable habitat, public access, sustainable funding, outdoor recreation and landowner respect to ensure a collective conservation voice.
- In 2018, the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks established a law enforcement Honor Guard Team comprised of 8 officers from across the state. The purpose of the team is to render honors to current and/or retired conservation officers, and employees who pass during the tenure with the department.

2018 PARK VISITATION

Over 330,000 camping units were recorded in 2018, continuing an upward trend that has been steadily growing for over a decade. In addition, more and more people are spending the day at a park, even if they don't stay overnight. Over 490,000 entrance licenses were purchased, up over 30,000 from last year.

TEN MOST VISITED PARKS IN 2018

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| 1. Custer State Park | 5. Angostura Recreation Area | 8. Snake Creek Recreation Area |
| 2. Lewis and Clark Recreation Area | 6. Roy Lake State Park | 9. Newton Hills State Park |
| 3. Cow Creek/Spring Creek Recreation Area | 7. Farm Island Recreation Area | 10. Platte Creek Recreation Area |
| 4. Oahe Downstream Recreation Area | | |

ENHANCED OPPORTUNITIES FOR HUNTERS AND ANGLERS

Providing enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities through simplifying regulations resulted in the repeal of multiple size restrictions on bass and walleye and removal of domicile fish possession limits; the removal of 7 boating restrictions and 5 state waterfowl refuges; as well as the repeal of several archery equipment restrictions including arrow rest size, compound bow let off, bow length and arrow weights and lengths. Furthermore, archery hunters are no longer required to use different draw weights based on the type of broadhead they choose to use and the requirement for bow hunter education was removed. Increased outdoor recreational opportunity was provided when archery deer hunters were able to begin the archery hunting season on September 1 rather than having to wait until the fourth Saturday of September. The spring turkey hunting season was also extended to May 31.

WALK-IN AREA PROGRAM REVIEW

In 2018, GFP staff reviewed the Walk-In Area (WIA) program to address many of the recurring criticisms it receives from hunters. Hunters largely support the program, but they would like to see improved habitat and more land in the program. A common request from pheasant hunters has been to show WIA lands that contain CRP or other undisturbed habitat differently on the public hunting maps.

HABITAT DEVELOPMENT

GFP is responsible for managing Game Production Areas (GPA) and state park and recreation lands for wildlife production and to provide outdoor recreational opportunities. These efforts require both development and maintenance of approximately 800 properties consisting of over 280,000 GPA acres and 103,000 state park and recreation land acres. Because over 80% of South Dakota is in private ownership, habitat efforts are focused on providing programs that landowners can fit within their operational plan on a voluntary, incentive-based approach. Annually, between private land and public land management, over \$9.2 million dollars are obligated to focus on habitat efforts.

2018 FISH STOCKING

Fish hatcheries in South Dakota help give local fisheries a boost. Quality fisheries exist in many waters. A total of 52.1 million fish were stocked in 2017. Stockings included 48 million walleye, 2.7 million perch and almost 680,000 saugeye.

2019 FEES

Annual Park Entrance License \$30	Resident Small Game + Fishing License \$55
Daily Park Entrance License \$6/person	Resident Small Game \$33
George S. Mickelson Trail Pass \$4/day \$15/year	Resident Annual Fishing \$28
Campsites \$11 - \$35/night	Nonresident Small Game (10-days, (2) 5-day periods) \$121
Camping Cabins \$45 - \$50/night	Nonresident Annual Fishing \$67

Visit gfp.sd.gov for a full list of 2018 fees.

2018 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE	FY2018	FY2018 %
Resident Licenses	\$ 11,189,618	22%
Nonresident Licenses	\$ 17,349,330	34%
Federal Funds	\$ 21,505,000	42%
Miscellaneous and Dedicated Revenue Items	\$ 1,280,899	2%
Total Fund Sources: Division of Wildlife	\$ 51,324,847	100%

DIVISION OF PARKS	FY2018	FY2018 %
Park Entrance Licenses and Camping	\$ 17,471,117	48%
Snowmobile Trails	\$ 809,935	2%
Boat Licenses and Motorboat Fuel	\$ 3,689,000	10%
Consessionaire and Franchise Fees	\$ 2,793,500	8%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 2,017,200	6%
State General Funds	\$ 2,772,205	8%
Federal Funds	\$ 6,903,495	19%
Total Funding Sources	\$ 36,456,452	100%