



Nest Predator Bounty Program

Frequently Asked Questions | April 23, 2019

The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks is focused on increasing participation in trapping from all ages while at the same time, reducing localized populations of nest predators as a way to enhance pheasant and duck nest success.

While the nest predator bounty program is a new incentive based program, the activity of trapping nest predators during the nesting season has been a utilized management technique for decades. Trapping is central to wildlife management, conservation and sustaining our state's outdoor traditions for the next generation.

All animals submitted for this program must have been trapped in South Dakota.

1.) What are the primary goals for the nest predator bounty program?

- Enhance duck and pheasant nest success.
- Increase trapping participation, awareness and education.
- Ensure South Dakota's hunting and trapping heritage remains strong for the next 100 years.
- Get the next generation involved and interested in outdoor recreation, conservation and wildlife management while increasing support for habitat.

2.) What species are eligible?

Raccoon, striped skunk, badger, opossum, and red fox are the eligible species for this program.

Road kill animals are not eligible.

3.) Are coyotes included in the nest predator bounty program?

No, coyotes are not a primary nest predator. Coyotes eat small mammals like rabbits and mice.

4.) What is the time period for the program?

The nest predator bounty program begins April 1, 2019, and will conclude August 31, 2019 - unless the \$500,000 cap is reached first.

**Research has shown that efforts to lower nest predator populations to enhance nest success of pheasants and ducks are most beneficial when implemented during the primary nesting season.*

5.) Who can participate?

Participation is for South Dakota residents.



6.) Is a license required?

No license is required for residents to participate in this program.

7.) Are there specific trapping regulations to follow?

Participants must comply with South Dakota trapping and hunting rules and regulations. Rules and regulations can be found in the current hunting and trapping handbook or online at <https://gfp.sd.gov/pages/regulations/>.

8.) What is the bounty amount for each species?

Participants will receive \$10 per tail for the following species: raccoon, striped skunk, badger, opossum and red fox. Participants must submit the tail bone and entire tail of these species to receive payment.

9.) Do the tails have to be a certain length?

No; however, tails must have the bone left in the tail. Tails without the bone will not be eligible for payment.

Burnt or charred tails will not be accepted.

10.) How and when will I receive payment?

Payment will not be received upon submission of the tail(s). GFP will process payments and send a check in the mail approximately every 30 days.

Animals must be trapped by the program participant within this timeframe:
April 1 - August 31, 2019.

As a reminder, road kill animals are not eligible for payment.

11.) I have heard that I will have to sign a legal affidavit. What does this mean?

Upon tail submission, participants are required to sign a legal affidavit indicating the tails were obtained during the time period outlined above and that they came from an animal they trapped. Participants under the age of 18 will need their parent/legal guardian to sign a legal affidavit on their behalf.

12.) How many tails can I turn in?

Participants are allowed to submit up to \$590 worth of tails per household.



Participants will receive an email confirmation of the transaction.

13.) Are young-of-the year animals eligible for the bounty?

Yes, free-ranging young are eligible.

14.) Where can I turn in my tails for the nest predator bounty program?

Tails can be submitted at the following GFP offices, Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm:

- Aberdeen: 605.626.2391, 5850 E. Hwy 12
- Chamberlain: 605.734.4530, 1550 E. King Ave.
- Ft. Pierre: 605.223.7700, 20641 SD Hwy 1806
- Huron: 605.353.7145, 895 3rd Street SW
- Mobridge: 605.845.7814, 909 Lake Front Drive
- Rapid City: 605.394.2391, 4130 Adventure Trail
- Sioux Falls: 605.362.2700, 4500 S. Oxbow Ave.
- Watertown: 605.882.5200, 400 West Kemp
- Webster: 605.345.3381, 603 E. 8th Ave.

*For bounty submissions outside of these office locations and times, please contact your local wildlife conservation officer or wildlife damage specialist. This contact information can be found online at <https://gfp.sd.gov/contactus/>. Local wildlife conservation officer numbers are also listed in the current version of the hunting and trapping handbook.

15.) How is the program funded?

License revenue will be used to pay for the nest predator bounty program not to exceed \$500,000.

16.) Will trapping/hunting be allowed on public lands and improved road rights-of-ways during April 1 – August 31?

Yes, pending GFP Commission approval, the dates for trapping on publically owned lands and improved road rights-of-ways would be extended to August 31.

Trapping in State Parks and Recreation Areas is not allowed during April 1 – August 31.

Permission is required to trap on private land leased for public hunting in the Walk-in Area program (WIA), Controlled Hunting and Access Program (CHAP) and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).

17.) How long will this program be available?

At this time, the program will begin on April 1, 2019 and end on August 31, 2019 – unless the cap of \$500,000 is reached first. Upon conclusion of the 2019 program, an evaluation will occur.



18.) Why is the department implementing this program when the 2014 Governor's Habitat Work Group Report states the contrary when it comes to using bounties?

The nest predator bounty program is intended to engage South Dakotans in outdoor recreation like trapping and increase the awareness and support of trapping as an important wildlife management tool. These efforts can also increase duck and pheasant nest success at localized levels when focused on quality nesting habitat. *Ring-necked pheasant thriving in South Dakota pages 165-168*, identifies studies where predator removal did have a positive influence on nest success at the localized level.

19.) Have bounties proven effective in surrounding states?

To the department's knowledge, this is the first attempt at implementing a nest predator bounty program that targets raccoons, striped skunks, red fox, opossum and badger.

20.) How will the effectiveness of the bounty program be determined? What metrics will be analyzed to determine success?

Upon completion of the nest predator bounty program, GFP will evaluate program participation and effort, number of submitted tails by species and geographic distribution of harvested animals. Furthermore, a qualitative survey through the mail will be used to obtain information from program participants.

21.) A brief biology of the five nest predator species is listed below.

- a. Raccoon (approximately lives 2-3 years)
 - i. Breeds December through June (peaks in March)
 - ii. Females birth 1-7 young (May – September)
 - iii. Young weaned 2-3 months later
- b. Striped skunks (approximately lives less than 3 years)
 - i. Breeds usually in February or March
 - ii. Female births 2-10 kits (peaks mid-May)
 - iii. Young weaned 6-8 weeks later
- c. Badger (approximately lives 4 – 5 years)
 - i. Breeds in late summer or early fall (delayed implantation)
 - ii. Female births 1-5 young – March or April
 - iii. Young weaned 8 weeks later
- d. Opossum (approximately lives 2 years)
 - i. Breeds January and again in May or June
 - ii. Female births 3-17 young (keeps in pouch)
 - iii. Young are independent at 100 days of age
- e. Red fox (approximately lives 6-10 years)



- i. Breeds December through March
- ii. Females birth 1-7 pups (7.5 weeks later)
- iii. Young weaned 6 weeks later

22.)What should participants do with the carcasses of animals?

Whole carcasses cannot be submitted to GFP offices for payment.

Participants must properly dispose of carcasses on their own.

Burying is most appropriate and easy to do for anyone.

23.)What happens to orphaned young?

When implementing wildlife management techniques such as predator removal, young animals that are entirely dependent of the lactating female will die.

24.) How is GFP dealing with potential fraud?

Participants will have to sign a legal affidavit which they attest to how, when and where the animals were trapped.

25.)Does GFP currently remove nest predators during the nesting season on Game Production Areas?

Yes, GFP does implement predator removal on a limited number of GPA's to enhance duck and pheasant nest success.

26.)Is specific Commission authority required to purchase live traps and implement a bounty program for a predator program?

No. South Dakota statute provides that the Department may direct or employ personnel to conduct programs to control foxes, coyotes, feral dogs, prairie dogs and other wild animals. SDCL 40-36-9. The expense for these programs shall be paid from the Game, Fish and Parks fund or the state animal damage control fund. [SDCL 40-36-9](#).

27.)Will license dollars used on the Nest Predator Bounty Program reduce funds available for a federal match with Pittman/Robertson (PR) funds?

No, license dollars used for the nest predator bounty program will have no effect on how much the Department receives in Pittman/Robertson excise tax funds.