



## 2026 Youth Trapping Recruitment Program

### Frequently Asked Questions

The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks is focused on increasing participation in youth trapping while at the same time reducing localized populations of nest predators as one way to enhance pheasant and duck nest success during the primary nesting season. Habitat development remains the top priority.

**All animals submitted for this program must have been harvested (i.e., trapped or shot) by the participating youth in South Dakota during allotted time found below.**

#### 1. What are the primary goals for the youth trapping recruitment program?

- Continue to recruit youth in the outdoor recreation of trapping.
- Connect families to the outdoors.
- Promote localized trapping, at high intensity, during nesting season to enhance duck and pheasant nest success.

#### 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 youth trapping recruitment program?

No, coyotes are not a primary nest predator. Coyotes primarily eat small mammals like rabbits and mice. In addition, coyotes will predate on newborn livestock and big game species. However, a separate Coyote Bounty Program was established in 2026 and will operate April 1-July 1, 2026, for all SD residents (details can be found in Coyote Bounty FAQ and Terms & Conditions).

#### 4. Who can participate?

Only South Dakota resident youth under age 18.

#### 5. What is the time period for the program?

March 1-July 1, 2026, for SD resident youth under age 18 only.

The program will conclude July 1, 2026, or sooner if the \$200,000 maximum is reached.

#### 6. Is a license required?

Participants under the age of 18 harvesting eligible nest predators are not required to have a license.



**7. Are there specific trapping and hunting 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 payment 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. Tails must have the bone left in the tail to be eligible for payment. Burnt or charred tails will not be accepted.

**10. Do I need to be present when submitting tails?**

Yes, all participating youth must be present with a parent/legal guardian when submitting tails for payment.

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

Upon tail submission, participants must be present, and a parent/legal guardian will need to sign a legal affidavit on their behalf indicating the tails were obtained during the time outlined above and that they came from an animal they harvested in South Dakota.

**12. 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.

**13. How many tails can I turn in?**

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

**14. Are young-of-the-year animals eligible for the bounty?**

Yes, free-ranging young (i.e., those capable of living away from their mother) are eligible. However, small opossum young living attached to their mother or still living in the pouch are not eligible.

**15. Where can I turn in my tails for the youth trapping recruitment program?**

Find tail collection times and locations online at: <https://gfp.sd.gov/bounty-program/>

For tail 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/>. Phone numbers for local wildlife conservation officers and wildlife damage specialists are also listed in the current version of the hunting and trapping handbook.



**16. How will I know when the maximum of \$200,000 is reached?**

GFP will communicate through a variety of media platforms. Total tails submitted can be viewed on the Tail Tracker at <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/e783dd72a89647f0b281f137d0b88efb>.

**17. How is the program funded?**

License revenue will be used to pay for the youth trapping recruitment program not to exceed \$200,000. License dollars used for this program will have no effect on how much the Department receives in Pittman/Robertson excise tax funds.

**18. Will trapping/hunting be allowed on public lands and improved road rights-of-ways during March 1 – July 1?**

Snares are prohibited May 1-November 13 on improved road rights-of-ways and on all public lands statewide. Live traps may be used on improved road rights-of-ways and public lands until August 31.

**19. How long will this program be available?**

On March 6, 2026, the GFP Commission rescinded the resolution adopted in 2023 which provided approval for the program through 2026. On this same date, the GFP Commission passed a new resolution to transition the Nest Predator Bounty Program to the Youth Trapping Recruitment Program through 2026.

[https://gfp.sd.gov/UserDocs/nav/Youth\\_Trapping\\_Recruitment\\_Program\\_and\\_Coyote\\_Bounty\\_Resolution\\_2026.pdf](https://gfp.sd.gov/UserDocs/nav/Youth_Trapping_Recruitment_Program_and_Coyote_Bounty_Resolution_2026.pdf)

**20. 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 carcasses is most appropriate method.

**21. How is GFP dealing with potential fraud?**

Participants must sign a legal affidavit which they attest to how, when, and where the animals were harvested.

**22. Will free live traps be given to participants in 2026?**

No. Each participant under the age of 18 will be offered a free copy of the National Trappers Association (NTA) Trapping Handbook, while supplies last.