

## **Minutes of the Game, Fish, and Parks Commission July 16-17, 2020**

Chairman Gary Jensen called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. CT via conference call. Commissioners Gary Jensen, Travis Bies, Mary Anne Boyd, Jon Locken (day 1), Russell Olson, Doug Sharp, Charles Spring, Robert Whitmyre. Public and staff were able to listen via SDPB livestream and participate via conference call with approximately 180 total participants.

### **DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

Chair Jensen called for conflicts of interest to be disclosed. None were presented.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Jensen called for any additions or corrections to the June 4, 2020 meeting minutes or a motion for approval.

Motion by Olson with second by Boyd TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE June 4, 2020 MEETING WITH MINOR REVISIONS. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

#### **Additional Commissioner Salary Days**

No additional commissioner salary days were requested.

#### **West River Right of Way Mowing**

Tom Kirschenmann, wildlife director, presented information regarding South Dakota Department of Transportation proposed rules that would include Dewey, Jones, and Stanley Counties to the list of western SD counties where ditch mowing activity cannot begin before June 15 therefore providing nesting habitat.

Motioned by Olson, second by Sharp TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 20-13 SUPPORTING THE DOT COMMISSION IN HAVING DEWEY, JONES AND STANLEY COUNTIES NOT MOW DITCHES UNTIL JUNE 15. (see appendix A) Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

#### **Covid 19 Update**

Kevin Robling, deputy secretary provided an update on Covid 19 as it relates to department operations. All office are open as of June 15<sup>th</sup>. Parks were open prior. Utilizing proper PPE, cleaning and symptom checking. Want to remind everyone the outdoors are open and note people have been taking advantage of the opportunity to use these resources showing an increase in license sales. Unfortunately, we have had some drownings recently and we remind recreational users to be safe and wear life jackets and kill switches. GFP will have more messaging on this in the future.

Jensen inquired about use of masks for users

Robling we ask people to take personal responsibility and social distance as much as possible, but we do not have the authority to require masks.

### **Flood Recovery Funding**

Scott Simpson, Parks and Recreation regional supervisor, provided an update on financing we can use for recovering from last spring's flooding. At request of the Governor the legislature made available funds through public safety that we have qualified for to take care of flooding impacts.

### **Brood Count Survey**

Travis Runia, senior wildlife biologist and Dr. Adam Janke, Iowa State provided detailed information on brood count surveys.

### **Pheasant Hunting Marketing Update**

Emily Kiel, Mike Gussias and Kirk Hulstein provided an update on pheasant hunting marketing.

### **Hunt for Habitat**

Secretary Kelly Hepler provided a brief update on hunt for habitat and noted the winners were announced via facebook live.

## **PROPOSALS**

### **3-Splash Waterfowl Hunting Package**

Chad Switzer, wildlife program administrator, presented the recommended changes to the duck hunting season to

1. Implementation of an experimental 2-tiered duck regulation in South Dakota with a 3-splash option.
2. Modify the special nonresident waterfowl hunting license by reducing the cost from \$115 to \$110 and by removing the inclusion of the migratory bird certification permit.

Motioned by Boyd, second by Olson TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE DUCK HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

### **Spring Turkey Hunting Season and Update**

Switzer presented the recommended changes to the spring wild turkey hunting season as follows:

1. Offer residents 140 more one-tag "male turkey" licenses for the Prairie Units than 2020.
2. Add Clark County to Hamlin County unit.
3. Remove Douglas County from Charles Mix County unit.
4. Create Unit 10A that includes both Aurora and Douglas counties.
5. Add Buffalo County to Brule County unit.
6. Add Beadle and Hand counties to Jerauld County unit.
7. Increase the number of archer turkey access permits for Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve from 20 to 30.
8. Establish 20 mentored turkey access permits for Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve that would be limited to a bow or crossbow.
9. For Adams Homestead and Nature Preserve, allow for uncased bows and crossbows for a resident hunter who possesses a valid mentored spring turkey license and an access permit.

Motioned by Whitmyre, second by Spring TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE SPRING TURKEY HUNTING SEASON.

Switzer informed the Commission there are no recommended changes to the Custer state park spring wild turkey hunting season.

Switzer presented the administrative action for spring turkey tag allocation by unit. (see appendix B)

### **Pheasant Hunting Season**

Kirschenmann presented the recommended changes to the pheasant hunting season as follows:

1. Modify the shooting hours for the first week of the regular from Noon to 10:00 a.m. Central Time beginning with the 2020 hunting season.
2. Modify the season end date from the first Sunday in January to one of the following options beginning with the 2020 hunting season:
  - a. Season end date of January 15, or
  - b. Season end date of January 31
3. Increase the daily bag limit from 3 to 4 and modify the possession limit accordingly for rooster pheasants beginning December 1<sup>st</sup> beginning with the 2021 hunting season.

Motioned by Olson, second by Locken TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE PHEASANT HUNTING SEASON WITH DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION OF 4 BIRDS AND JANUARY 31<sup>ST</sup> SEASON END DATE. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

Kirschenmann presented the recommended change to the pheasant hunting season to Modify the shooting hours from Noon to 10:00 a.m. Central Time beginning with the 2020 hunting season to provide additional hunting opportunity and take advantage of cooler temperatures.

Motioned by Boyd, second by Spring TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE PHEASANT HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

### **Other Upland Bird Hunting Seasons**

Kirschenmann presented the recommended change to the grouse, partridge and quail hunting seasons to Modify the season end date from the first Sunday in January to one of the following options beginning with the 2020 hunting season: a. Season end date of January 15, or b. Season end date of January 31.

Motioned by Sharp, second by Olson TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGE TO THE GROUSE, PATRIDGE, AND QUAIL HUNTING SEASON AS PRESENTED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

### **Private Shooting Preserve Bag Limits**

Robling explained the Department has been in contact with private shooting preserve operators and other stakeholders to determine whether there is support for the

opportunity for hunters to shoot an unrestricted bag limit on private shooting preserves. There was support among the groups so long as the additional cost was on the hunter and not the preserve operators. He then presented the recommended changes as follows:

1. Create two new small game permit types and establish fee:
  - a. Resident small game unrestricted permit (Unrestricted – Valid on private shooting preserves only).
  - b. Nonresident shooting preserve unrestricted permit (Unrestricted).
2. Amend bag limits on for individuals hunting private shooting preserves to reflect no bag limit when hunting with an unrestricted small game license or an unrestricted shooting preserve license.
3. Licenses would only be valid if used in conjunction with an already existing license that authorizes a hunter to hunt on PSP properties. For example: a nonresident would have to purchase either a nonresident small game license or 1 day, 5 day or annual PSP license first, and then could purchase an unrestricted nonresident shooting preserve license on top of their existing license and hunt unrestricted on PSPs that offer the option.
4. Amend language that would only allow an individual to exercise the unrestricted portion of their license in party hunting if all parties to the hunt have the same license.
5. Depending on method of sale, may have to amend reporting requirements by PSP operators to include tracking of unrestricted license sales.

Motioned by Bies, second by Sharp TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGE TO THE SHOOTING PRESERVE RULES AS PRESENTED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

Motioned by Sharp, second by Whitmyre TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGE TO THE SHOOTING PRESERVE FEES AS PRESENTED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

### **Elk Raffle Drawing Date**

Switzer presented the recommended changes to the Custer state park elk hunting season to Modify the drawing time period for the elk license raffle from at least 120 days before the Custer State Park rifle elk season begins to no later than July 15. He explained the intent of the change being recommended is to allow an opportunity for unsuccessful applicants from the regular elk hunting season drawings to purchase raffle tickets for this elk license.

Motioned by Boyd, second by Locken TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGE TO THE ELK RAFFLE DRAWING AS PRESENTED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

### **Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Season and Update**

Keith Fisk, program administrator, presented the recommended changes to the bobcat hunting and trapping season as follows:

1. Modify the season dates in eastern South Dakota to align with western South Dakota. Proposed season dates would be December 15 to February 15, statewide.
2. Modify the open area in eastern South Dakota to include all counties. The proposed open area would be statewide.

Fisk explained bobcats occur in several areas of eastern South Dakota where the current bobcat season is not open. Some minimal harvest in those areas would not be detrimental to bobcat populations and are protected by the limit of one bobcat per hunter or trapper. This expansion would create additional opportunity and aligning the two seasons' dates (eastern South Dakota and western South Dakota) brings consistency and simplifies regulations.

Motioned by Boyd, second by Olson TO APPROVED THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE BOBCAT HUNTING AND TRAPPING SEASON. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

### **Fishing Regulations**

Geno Adams, fisheries program administrator, presented the recommended changes to the spearing rules as follows:

1. Currently there is no gamefish spearfishing season on the Missouri River from the Nebraska - South Dakota border up to Ft. Randall dam. To standardize spearfishing regulations in this area with other Missouri River dam tailrace areas, a May 1 – March 31 is recommended.
2. This was requested by a spearer. According to surveyed spearkers, as with rod and reel angling, the last hour of light is one of the best times to spearfish. Currently gamefish can be taken with legal spear, legal speargun, legal crossbow and bow and arrow, one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Extending the hours to one-half hour after sunset will allow for additional opportunity for those spearkers who choose to utilize it. Rough fish spearing is currently allowed 24 hours a day.

Motioned by Bies, second by Olson TO APPROVED THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE SPEARING RULES. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

### **Aeration and System Use Overview**

John Lott, fisheries chief, presented the recommended changes to the aeration rules to require safety signage in association with operation of aeration systems during periods of ice cover on waters with open public access. He explained Aeration is used to prevent fish kills during the summer and winter and to prevent ice from forming that may damage permanent docks or other structures anchored in the lakebed. Operation of aeration systems during the winter can cause significant public safety issues, as systems create open water and weakened ice conditions. Often, the public is unaware of system operation until it is accidentally discovered, while on the ice. Establishing a requirement that an aeration system in operation during periods of ice cover, on waters to which the public has open access, be signed and marked, would reduce safety issues associated with winter operation of aeration systems. Signage requirements would include:

- Signs of highly visible size and design indicating "Danger Open Water", clearly showing the location of the open water created by the aeration system, posted at all boat ramps and public access points any time the aeration system is in operation.

- Conspicuous markers, sufficient to notify the public of the location of the aeration system, shall be placed around the open water area during periods of ice cover.
- Access area signs and on-lake markers must be removed by March 30 each year, or earlier, if weather conditions warrant.

Motioned by Sharp, second by Whitmyre TO MODIFY THE AERATION RULES TO REQUIRE SAFETY SIGNAGE AS RECOMMENDED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

## **AIS**

Lott presented the recommended changes to AIS rules as follows:

1. Remove the prohibition on possessing, transporting, selling, purchasing, or propagating AIS from administrative rule.
2. Create an additional exemption for possession of AIS to allow an owner or agent of the owner of a conveyance to transport the conveyance for decontamination using a department approved process.
3. Remove prohibitions in administrative rule on launching a boat or boat trailer into the waters of the state with AIS attached.
4. Repeal the rule allowing for the creation of local boat registries.
5. Remove the exemption to the decontamination requirement for boats in a local boat registry in association with repealing the rule allowing the creation of registries.
6. Create a new rule to define the department-approved decontamination protocol.
7. Update the list of containment waters to include Pickerel Lake and Waubay Lake.

Motioned by Sharp, second by Boyd TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE AIS RULES. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

## **Public Waters**

Geno Adams presented the recommended changes to public water zoning and fishing limits as follows:

1. Establish an electric-motors-only zone on Canyon Lake in Pennington County and Bismarck Lake in Custer County.
2. Change Nebraska – South Dakota border trout limit from 7 daily to 5 daily to match South Dakota inland waters.

Adams explained Canyon Lake and Bismarck Lake are utilized by canoers and kayakers. The City of Rapid City would like an electric motor only regulation on Canyon Lake. The United States Forest Service would like an electric motor only regulation on Bismarck Lake. And currently the trout daily limit of 7 on Nebraska – South Dakota border waters does not match the South Dakota inland waters daily limit (5) or the Nebraska border water daily limit (5) for trout. Changing the daily limit for trout on Nebraska – South Dakota border waters to 5 would align the daily limit with those for South Dakota inland waters and Nebraska border waters.

Motioned by Sharp, second by Whitmyre TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE PUBLIC WATER ZONING AND FISH LIMITS RULES. Roll Call

vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

The Public Hearing began at 2:00 p.m. and concluded at 2:30 p.m. The minutes follow these Commission meeting minutes.

## **OPEN FORUM**

Jensen opened the floor for discussion from those in attendance on matters of importance to them that may not be on the agenda.

Zack Hunke, Wildlife Federation President, Watertown, SD spoke regarding public water closure on Waubay Lake. This is a meandered body of water and meandered laws should be enforced. Believes in producer rights but does not want to see people completely restricted. Would like to see address the issues that would allow these bodies of water to remain open.

Jocelyn Nickerson, Humane Society, Omaha, NE spoke opposing bobcat hunting and trapping. This would allow an unlimited number of bobcats to be taken and it is extremely cruel. There are more wildlife watchers who enjoy watching them on film than those who trap them. They are helpful to farmers as they prey on other wildlife. Hound trapping is barbaric. Would like to see these small native carnivores be protected

Jamie Al-haj, Rapid City, SD Humans are an interesting animal that do what they desire and not what should be done. Asking when establishing trapping season that the time of year that they give birth and raise their young be taken into consideration. The public is watching.

Nancy Hilding, Black Hawk, SD, president of the Prairie Hills Audubon Society spoke, should require masks inside of buildings when the motorcycle rally is coming. Otter Management plan was distributed on May 8th and is listed for adoption tomorrow but have not seen changes made since then. Requested it and received it but doesn't see many changes although the public sent in recommendations. Does not want action to be taken until September and allow people to make additional comment because her comments were not integrated. Would like to see an introduction at the Little white, Belle Fourche and .... Rivers located West River.

Christine Sandvik, Rapid City, SD said only 1 percent of reports came from research and 40 were dead animals. 40 years of data was not broken down to provide current numbers. It's primarily east river and there should be an investment into observing these species if money can be spent on the nest predator bounty program. We need a strong population statewide before we open a trapping season

Tuffy Halls, Hot Springs, SD West River Fur Harvesters Association spoke regarding river otter season noting it is a good management tool. And support the river otter trapping season

Jasen Albrecht, Huron, SD spoke regarding concerns on a public road that in 1952 the public roadway has not been utilized on one end that services lake lots near their residence. If this road is utilized there would be a home and utilities that would need to be relocated 15-30 feet that would only allow for use of 1/5 acre of land. Spoke with county commissioner to correct or document how this could happen.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

The Public Hearing began at 2:00 p.m. and concluded at 2:30 p.m. The minutes follow these Commission meeting minutes.

## **FINALIZATIONS**

### **Nonresident Landowner Owned Land License Application**

Chad Switzer, wildlife program administrator, presented the recommended changes to modify 41:06:02:03 (16) from

Resident-landowner-on-own land deer or antelope license, one-half the fee of the deer or antelope license which has been applied for;

To

Landowner-on-own land deer or antelope license, one-half the fee of the deer or antelope license which has been applied for;

Switzer explained that during the 2020 South Dakota Legislative Session, House Bill 1184 provides for nonresident landowner licenses to qualifying landowners for the West River deer hunting season and firearm antelope hunting season. House Bill 1184 indicated the GFP Commission shall promulgate rules, in accordance with Chapter 1-26, to establish fees for licenses issued under this section.

Motioned by Bies, second by Olson TO FINALIZE THE NONRESIDENT LANDOWNER OWNED LAND LICENSE APPLICATION RULE 41:06:02:03 (16) AS RECOMMENDED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

### **Use of Parks and Public Lands**

Scott Simpson, parks and wildlife director, presented the recommended change to provide for an exemption to the requirement to purchase a park entrance license at North Point Recreation Area, Fort Randall South Shore Recreation Area, Randall Creek Recreation Area and Fort Randall Spillway Lakeside Use Area for enrolled members of the Yankton Sioux Tribe and their families. He explained this exemption would provide members of the Yankton Sioux Tribe and their immediate families greater access to local outdoor recreational opportunities. These four park units are located within proximity to the Yankton Sioux Tribe reservation area. This exemption does not apply to other fees such as camping, lodging, picnic shelter reservations, or equipment rentals.

Motioned by Boyd, second by Sharp TO FINALIZE THE PARK ENTRANCE LICENSE EXEMPTION RULE CHANGE 41:03:03 AS RECOMMENDED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

## River Otter Season

Switzer, presented the recommended changes to establish a conservative the river otter trapping season as follows:

1. Establish a trapping season that is open from sunrise on November 1 to sunset on December 31 in all counties of the state.
2. Limit of one river otter per trapper per season.
3. Statewide harvest limit of 15 river otters. Season will end prior to December 31 if the harvest limit is reached.
4. Trapping season open to residents only with a furbearer license.
5. A river otter shall be reported to the Department within 24 hours of harvest. At time of reporting, arrangements will be made to check-in carcass and detached pelt at a GFP office or designated location for registration and tagging of the pelt within 5 days of harvest. Additionally, once the season has closed (last day of season or harvest limit reached), a person has 24 hours to notify the Department of a harvested river.
6. The pelt shall be removed from the carcass and the carcass shall be surrendered to the Department. After the pelt has been tagged, it shall be returned to the trapper. Upon request, the carcass may be returned to the trapper after the carcass has been inspected and biological data collected.
7. Any river otter harvested after the 24-hour period following the close of the season, will be considered incidental take and shall be surrendered to the Department.
8. A person may only possess, purchase or sell raw river otter pelts that are tagged through the eyeholes with the tag provided by the Department or if the river otter was harvested on tribal or trust land of an Indian reservation or another state and is properly and securely tagged with a tag supplied by the governmental entity issuing the license.

And recommended change from proposal to Modify the open area from statewide to the following counties in eastern South Dakota: Aurora, Beadle, Bon Homme, Brookings, Brown, Charles Mix, Clark, Clay, Codrington, Davison, Day, Deuel, Douglas, Grant, Hamlin, Hanson, Hutchinson, Jerauld, Kingsbury, Lake, Lincoln, Marshall, McCook, Miner, Minnehaha, Moody, Roberts, Sanborn, Spink, Turner, Union and Yankton

He explained River otter populations in South Dakota continue to grow and expand into available habitat. A statewide season will provide harvest information from across the state. It also provides the greatest opportunity to pursue trapping of river otter. Over the last five years (2015-2019) the Department has received an average of 16.6 incidentally trapped river otter/year. River otter are most frequently incidentally taken during the beaver trapping season given similarity of habitat and trapping methods. The majority (72%) of the 83 incidentally trapped river otter reported over the last five years were taken in November. Updates on river otter harvest will be available on the Department website and by calling a designated phone number. A press release and other information tools will be used when the harvest limit has been met, similar to the mountain lion harvest notification process.

Motion by Sharp, second by Olson TO AMEND THE RIVER OTTER TRAPPING SEASON AS RECOMMENDED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

Motion by Olson, second by Sharp TO FINALIZE THE RIVER OTTER TRAPPING SEASON AS AMENDED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

## **Fall Turkey**

Chad Switzer, wildlife program administrator, presented the recommended changes to the Fall Turkey Hunting Season

1. Offer 125 less resident single tag licenses and 35 more resident double tag licenses for Prairie Units compared to 2019.
2. Close prairie units 12A (Gregory County), 50A (Mellette County), and 60A (Tripp County).
3. Establish and open prairie unit 12A (Bon Homme County).

And recommended change from proposal to Reduce the number of resident and nonresident single tag “any turkey” licenses for the Black Hills unit from 200 and 16 to 100 and 8, respectively.

Motion by Olson, second by Boyd TO AMEND THE FALL TURKEY HUNTING SEASON PROPOSAL AS RECOMMENDED. Motion by Boyd with second by Sharp. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 8 yes and 0 no votes.

Motion by Olson, second by Sharp TO FINALIZE CHANGES TO THE FALL TURKEY HUNTING SEASON 41:06:14 AS AMENDED. Motion by Boyd with second by Sharp. Roll Call vote: Bies – no; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 6 yes and 1 no votes.

Switzer presented the administrative action for turkey cense allocation by unit. (see appendix C)

Motioned by Boyd, second by Spring TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE TURKEY HUNTING LICENSE ALLOCATIONS BY UNIT. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Locken – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

## **Lost License Replacement**

Switzer presented the recommended change to remove the \$20 administrative fee for lost or destroyed licenses, permits or game tags. The license agent’s fee established by SDCL 41-6-66.1 would still be charged by license agents and the Department. He explained that after considering public comment and a review of this administrative fee for all license types, the Department recommends removing this administrative fee. Authorized license agents and the department as per SDCL 41-6-66.1 will charge a license agent’s fee of \$4 for resident and \$8 for nonresident licenses.

Motioned by Boyd, second by Spring TO FINALIZE THE CHANGES TO THE REPLACEMENT OF LOST LICENSE RULES 41:06:02. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

## **Administrative Rules Review ARSD 41:08, 41:09, 41:10 and 41:13**

Jon Kotilnek, senior staff attorney, explained that during the 2019 Legislative Session HB 1162 was introduced by Representative Gosch. The intent of the bill was to have the Department conduct a systematic review of our administrative rules. During the review the Department was to identify rules that are irrelevant, inconsistent, illogically arranged, or unclear in their intent and direction. After discussions with Representative Gosch, the Department agreed to conduct the systematic review without

legislation and to report its findings and corrective changes back to the Executive Board of the Legislative Research Council. These formally proposed suggested changes are to correct inconsistencies, remove unnecessary barriers and arrange rules logically thus promoting an administrative code that benefits current, former and new users.

The Department recommends the following rule changes for the following administrative rules in an effort to reduce redundancy, increase transparency and improve consistency:

#### Chapter 41:08

Motion by Whitmyre, second by Spring TO AMEND RULES IN CHAPTER 41:08 TO REMOVE 41:08:03:01. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

Motion by Olson, second by Whitmyre TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES AS RECOMMENDED TO RULES IN CHAPTER 41:08 AS AMENDED. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

#### Chapter 41:09

Motion by Whitmyre, second by Bies TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES AS RECOMMENDED TO RULES IN CHAPTER 41:09. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

#### Chapter 41:10

Motion by Bies second by Boyd TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES AS RECOMMENDED TO RULES IN CHAPTER 41:10. Roll Call vote: Bies – yes; Boyd – yes; Olson – yes; Sharp – yes; Spring – yes; Whitmyre – yes; Jensen – yes. Motion carried 7 yes and 0 no votes.

### **DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

#### **Sylvan Lake Update**

Pat Wyss provided an update on Sylvan Lake.

#### **Roy Lake and Spring Creek Updates**

Scott Simpson, Parks and Recreation Division Director, provided the Commission a brief update.

#### **Visitation and Sales Report**

Al Nedved, parks and recreation deputy director gave a report on revenue, camping and visitation through June.

### **DIVISION OF WILDLIFE**

**River Otter Management Plan** (will be presented at the September meeting)

**Mule Deer Harvest Information** (will be presented at a future meeting)

**State Threatened & Endangered Species Status Review** (will be presented at a future meeting)

## **2020 Fishing Season Update**

Geno Adams provide an update on the 2020 fishing season.

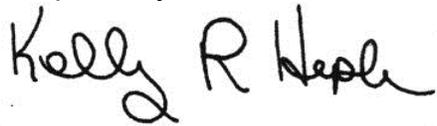
## **Licenses Sales Update**

Heather Villa, wildlife administration chief, said license sales are still following an upward trend. For resident licenses we are up 35,800 licenses and \$905,797 in revenue. Nonresident licenses are up 15,399 licenses and \$603,649 in revenue. This puts us at a total gain of 51,199 licenses and \$1,509,466 in revenue. July 1 the Habitat Stamp was enacted. This accounts for \$235,395 in increased revenue. Habitat stamp funds can only be used for habitat and access improvements on public lands and waters.

## **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly R Hepler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly R. Hepler, Department Secretary

**Appendix A**  
**Resolution 20-13**

WHEREAS, current Administrative Rule prohibits ditch mowing before June 15 in Gregory, Lyman, and Tripp counties of western South Dakota and prohibits ditch mowing before July 10 for all counties east of the Missouri River on the state highway trunk system; and

WHEREAS, over time, additional counties west of the Missouri River have increased pheasant habitat resulting in steady increase in pheasant numbers; particularly in Dewey, Jones, and Stanley County; and

WHEREAS, these counties represent the primary western periphery of the pheasant range in western South Dakota; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 over 19,000 pheasants were harvested in these three counties; and

WHEREAS, roadside habitat can be locally important for pheasant nesting habitat; and

WHEREAS, the consideration in front of the DOT Commission falls in line with on-going discussions regarding efforts and actions to enhance habitat efforts, bolster pheasant numbers, and the promotion of pheasant hunting in South Dakota.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Game, Fish and Parks Commission hereby expresses support to the South Dakota Transportation Commission for their consideration of adding Dewey, Jones, and Stanley Counties to the list of western SD counties where ditch mowing activity cannot begin before June 15.

## Appendix B

### 2021 -2022 Spring Turkey

Unit #	Unit Name	Resident		Nonresident		License Totals							
		TomT	2 TomT	TomT	2 TomT	RES 1-tag	RES 2-tag	RES Licenses	RES Tags	NR 1-tag	NR 2-tag	NR Licenses	NR Tags
01A	Minnehaha	80	0	0	0	80	0	80	80	0	0	0	0
02A	Pennington	200	0	16	0	200	0	200	200	16	0	16	16
06A	Brookings	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	20	0	0	0	0
07A	Yankton	280	0	0	0	280	0	280	280	0	0	0	0
08A	Davison/Hanson	80	0	0	0	80	0	80	80	0	0	0	0
08B	Davison/Hanson	80	0	0	0	80	0	80	80	0	0	0	0
10A	Aurora/Douglas	30	0	0	0	30	0	30	30	0	0	0	0
11A	Bennett	30	0	3	0	30	0	30	30	3	0	3	3
12A	Bon Homme	250	0	0	0	250	0	250	250	0	0	0	0
13A	Brule/Buffalo	150	0	0	0	150	0	150	150	0	0	0	0
15A	Butte/Lawrence	350	0	28	0	350	0	350	350	28	0	28	28
16A	Campbell/Walworth	10	0	0	0	10	0	10	10	0	0	0	0
17A	Charles Mix	350	0	0	0	350	0	350	350	0	0	0	0
19A	Clay	120	0	0	0	120	0	120	120	0	0	0	0
19B	Clay	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20A	Corson	50	0	4	0	50	0	50	50	4	0	4	4
21A	Custer	150	0	12	0	150	0	150	150	12	0	12	12
22A	Day/Codington	90	0	0	0	90	0	90	90	0	0	0	0
23A	Deuel	110	0	0	0	110	0	110	110	0	0	0	0
24A	Dewey/Ziebach	150	0	12	0	150	0	150	150	12	0	12	12
27A	Fall River	75	0	6	0	75	0	75	75	6	0	6	6
29A	Grant	280	0	0	0	280	0	280	280	0	0	0	0
30A	Gregory	700	0	56	0	700	0	700	700	56	0	56	56
31A	Haakon	0	200	0	16	0	200	200	400	0	16	16	32
32A	Hamlin/Clark	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	20	0	0	0	0
35A	Harding	100	0	8	0	100	0	100	100	8	0	8	8
36A	Hughes	30	0	0	0	30	0	30	30	0	0	0	0
37A	Hutchinson	60	0	0	0	60	0	60	60	0	0	0	0
39A	Jackson	150	0	12	0	150	0	150	150	12	0	12	12
40A	Jerauld/Beadle/Hand	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	20	0	0	0	0
41A	Jones	75	0	6	0	75	0	75	75	6	0	6	6
44A	Lincoln	50	0	0	0	50	0	50	50	0	0	0	0
44B	Lincoln	50	0	0	0	50	0	50	50	0	0	0	0
45A	Lyman	100	0	8	0	100	0	100	100	8	0	8	8
48A	Marshall/Roberts	440	0	0	0	440	0	440	440	0	0	0	0
49A	Meade	0	300	0	24	0	300	300	600	0	24	24	48
50A	Mellette	350	0	28	0	350	0	350	350	28	0	28	28
52A	Moody	60	0	0	0	60	0	60	60	0	0	0	0
53A	Perkins	0	100	0	8	0	100	100	200	0	8	8	16
56A	Sanborn	10	0	0	0	10	0	10	10	0	0	0	0
58A	Stanley	40	0	4	0	40	0	40	40	4	0	4	4
58B	Stanley	2	0	1	0	2	0	2	2	1	0	1	1
60A	Tripp	400	0	32	0	400	0	400	400	32	0	32	32
61A	Towner	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	20	0	0	0	0
62A	Union	120	0	0	0	120	0	120	120	0	0	0	0
62B	Union	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65A	Oglala Lakota	40	0	4	0	40	0	40	40	4	0	4	4
67A	Todd	75	0	6	0	75	0	75	75	6	0	6	6
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,807</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>5,807</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>6,407</b>	<b>7,007</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>342</b>
	Unit	TomT	2 TomT	TomT	2 TomT	RES 1-tag	RES 2-tag	RES Licenses	RES Tags	NR 1-tag	NR 2-tag	NR Lic	NR Tags
						<b>RES &amp; NR:</b>		<b>6,053</b>	<b>648</b>			<b>6,701</b>	<b>7,349</b>

## Appendix C

### 2020-2021 Fall Turkey

Unit #	Unit Name	Resident		Nonresident		License Totals							
		AnyT 31	2 AnyT 37	AnyT 31	2 AnyT 37	RES 1-Tag	RES 2-Tag	RES Licenses	RES Tags	NR 1-Tag	NR 2-Tag	NR License	NR Tags
07A	Yankton	150				150		150	150				
12A	Bon Homme	150		12		150		150	150	12		12	12
39A	Jackson		35		3		35	35	70		3	3	6
48A	Marshall/Roberts	100				100		100	100				
BH1	Black Hills	100		8		100		100	100	8		8	8
TOTAL		500	35	20	3	500	35	535	570	20	3	23	26
				RES & NR:		520	38	558	596				

## **Public Hearing Minutes of the Game, Fish and Parks Commission July 16, 2020**

The Commission Chair Gary Jensen began the public hearing at 2:00 p.m. CT via conference call. Commissioners Gary Jensen, Travis Bies, Mary Anne Boyd, Jon Locken, Russell Olson, Doug Sharp, Charles Spring, and Robert Whitmyre were present. Olson indicated written comments were provided to the Commissioners prior to this time and will be reflected in the Public Hearing Minutes. Olson then invited the public to come forward with oral testimony.

### **Nonresident Landowner Owned Land License Application**

No verbal comments

### **Use of Parks and Public Lands**

Jason Cooke, Vice Chair of Yankton Sioux Tribe, advocating for free access and swimming to the four sites for tribal members at North Point and South Shore. Good start to a working relationship with the state.

Derrick Marks, Wagner, SD said he wants to petition on behalf of their people for access as none of the tribal land has good access to the water. As ancestral people to the land there has been a lot of hope in this.

Nancy Hilding, Black Hawk, SD, president of the Prairie Hills Audubon Society supports giving the tribe what they want.

### **River Otter Season**

Nancy Hilding, Black Hawk, SD, president of the Prairie Hills Audubon Society spoke regarding river otter and said people should have otter to look at and to trap, but there are few verified sightings so the trapping season should not extend across the state. Prefer it none exist at all as there is not data to support a 15 otter take. The incidental take happens for 6 months and the season would be 2 months and beaver for another 4 months. Sent prior messages that this is no valid as there was not adequate public notice should also have checked with each tribe and federal government and neighboring states. Want to see proof to this happening. You need otters on the land for reintroduction prior to trapping.

Christine Sandvik, Rapid City, SD failing to see the value of this animal as a live animal opposed to their value dead. They are great for recreation purposes and if they are hunted, they are only used once if it's for photography you can maintain the resources. Definitely against the trapping season and need a reintroduction to the Black Hills. Beaver trapping prevents dams which are good habitat, so we need to do things to encourage the river otter habitat.

### **Fall Turkey**

No verbal comments

### **Lost License Replacement**

No verbal comments

**Administrative Rules Review ARSD 41:08, 41:09, and 41:10**

Nancy Hilding, Black Hawk, SD, president of the Prairie Hills Audubon Society  
Complaint about how the fire protection district was divided. Complaints about  
consistence for beaver trapping in different areas of the state. Statute for mink says  
they can be killed with permission. Feels they should be consolidated, and beaver  
hunting should be ended at different time incase otter are accidently killed. Complaint  
about trap check time in trapping prohibitions rule about number of calendar days being  
unclear and silly. Would like it changed to hours to be clear. Complaint about public  
notice not being 20 days in advance and not following IRRC rules will bring it to their  
attention.

See attached written public comments submitted prior to the public hearing

The public Hearing concluded at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Handwritten signature of Kelly R. Hepler in cursive script.

Kelly R. Hepler, Department Secretary

# Public Comments

## Administrative Rules Review

---

**Jessica Necklace**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Our family utilize the Missouri River a lot on the Yankton Sioux Reservation. I feel that Native Americans within Boundaries of YST should not have to pay entrance fees because the land and waterways join tribal lands. This is one benefit the Native Americans could utilize their land without having the fee.

## Fall Turkey

---

**James Elsing**

**Lemmon SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

See attached letter.

---

**John Janecke**

**Winner SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

This is an addendum to my previous email regarding the closing of Tripp County to fall turkey hunting. Even though I have attempted to find out the reason for NOT having a season, I have been unable to do so.

Yesterday, I was going fishing and saw at least two (2) HERDS (not flocks) of wild turkeys. Minimum of ten (10) each. I wish that I had a camera to send you photos...I use a flip phone, so any photos would have been realistically useless.

I am apposed to closing Tripp County to fall turkey hunting. The turkey population appears to me to be greatly adequate for residents to hunt.

# Nonresident Landowner Owned Land License Application

---

**Neil Hawthorne**

**Anchorage AK**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I have hunted, as a resident for 20+ years and as a landowner nonresident for maybe 20 years for deer, turkey and antelope. I pay your taxes on 400 (now 900) acres in Custer county and feel that my license should not be much more than twice what I used to pay for a deer license. This would be, of course, on my own land. Thank you

---

**Adam Golay**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

If non resident landowners want to hunt deer west river they already have a process for them to get tags. That's why there is a west river special buck non resident app that they can apply for. They won't draw every year but the privilege of hunting deer in South Dakota every year should only be for residents. If someone wants to hunt deer every year & buy land in another state that they don't live in then they should consider buying land in a state that has a lot more deer in it than South Dakota. There needs to be incentives to stay in South Dakota & hunting privileges are one of them. Plus more non residents hunting our big game takes away an opportunity for a resident to hunt big game in the state he or she lives in.

---

**Jim Gruber**

**Estelline SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

look, if you are going to do this for west river landowners.. then do the same for east river non resident owners also... why just west river?

---

**Casey Foster**

**Sparks, Ne 69220 NE**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am one of the non-resident landowners that will be eligible for one of these permits. I pay about \$8000 a year in SD taxes. So, I would like to see the fee lower but believe \$140 is a fair price.

---

**Hale Kreycik**

**Douglas WY**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am of the opinion that this proposal is a wise one. As a non-resident landowner, I see value and especially fairness since I am paying several thousand dollars in real estate taxes to S. D. each year. Any incentive encouraging visitors to the State can only result in additional income for small business, generate sales tax revenues, and be of an overall benefit.

In addition, I suggest you consider a procedure for the landowner to be able to have the license issued to an immediate family member as well, especially youngsters under a certain age. Anything that can be done to encourage and recruit a new hunting population would be a positive for all concerned, including wildlife. Thank you for the opportunity to comment!!

---

**Eric Gonzale**

**Glen Burnie MD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a non-resident landowner of 160 acres in Fall River, I completely support this action. Many states have similar rules - for example, in NY non-resident land owners are allowed to hunt their land provided they own a minimal 50 acres. I believe WY has a similar rule, as does MO, ME, OH and many others...

## Other

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**Raymond Martinmaas**

**Orient SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Disabled hunter access

---

**Pamela Scouten**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I cannot believe we are approving such a large budget going towards promoting the increase in license sales to bring in more out of state hunters. The reason why those brood report numbers deterred people is because THERE ARE NO BIRDS left to hunt. I have always been an avid bird hunter and not from lack of trying, but I did not take a single pheasant last year. Unless you own land or you pay a game farm \$100+ PER BIRD, you cannot pheasant hunt in this state. That money should have been spent to improve public hunting so people actually had a chance to hunt. Another disappointing decision for SD hunting.

---

**Greg Fecho**

**Mpls MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Hello, in regards to marketing plan and elimination of brood count.

Eliminating the BCS will come back and bite you, non resident hunters like myself have relied on that info to plan our hunts, I have hunted Chamberlain west to Presho, up for a number of years by Ipswich , and the last number of yers by Miller, Highmore.

You have to give us some guage to plan our destination, for the cost of a 3 day trip for NR, 120.00 license, lodging, food, fuel, pay farmer , etc can easily hit 600- 1000.00 per hunter, that is a lot of money to drive 6 hours and not see a bird ( which has happened the last couple of years)help us, don't hide facts.

2) youth hunting, google " Greg Fecho hunting" story down by Mpls Outdoor writer on getting kids involved. When I go to a steak house, bar, gas station in SD during hunting season, u never see a group of NR with kids , never, the reason , COST, very few people can bring their 2 sons along for 3 days and spend 2000-2500 all in , it is outrageous. Come up with a NR family license, a cost that helps bring down the cost.

3) give a option for 3 , 3 day hunts, the 5 day is worthless , most people can't hunt 5 days for reasons of work, family, etc. if you offered that license ( or something similar) you would I bet get some of those hunters to come out 3 times vs 2.

Don't get me wrong, I love SD, I rented a camper last year and drove west to Pollack, SD , met a rancher and spend 3 days on back of a horse driving cattle , went from there to Gregory helped cook at a archery deer camp, from their to Wagner where I met up and hunted with friends from MN and Wagner folks, 23 days I was gone, going again this year.

Feel free to call, love to give u input on NR hunters opinion.

Thanks gf

---

**Alex Petrik**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I believe this should not be passed as the money from the passes should be used to manage, maintain, and operate our parks.

---

**Gregory Nowak**

**Armour SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The decision to end the South Dakota Pheasant Brood Survey is extremely disappointing to me. It is sad to see my state making decisions based on some "marketing" scheme and discontinuing a 70 years old South Dakota tradition. The state takes in \$218 Million from Pheasant hunters, can spend \$700,000 during the first year of it's marketing plan but can't spend \$80,000 to \$90,000 to complete the survey. Give me 15 mins worth of training, a route in south central SD, the time you want it surveyed and I will do it for free!

---

**Sharon Blais**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Quit killing all of our wildlife. All animals play an important role in our ecosystem.

---

**Curt Rich**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Doing away with the pheasant road survey is a grave mistake. This data is a valuable tool to measure the effectiveness of management programs . . .and to do away it is irresponsible and short sighted . . .if this is the new philosophy of the GF&P then may there need to be an evaluation of those responsible for this policy . ....

---

**Paul Lepisto**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Please see the attached comments from the SD Division of the Izaak Walton League of America urging reconsideration of decision to stop conducting annual pheasant brood survey.

---

**Bruce Knowlan**

**Webster SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Is it true that Sd pheasant hunting isn't now a business not a sport ?

---

## River Otter Season

---

**Steven Peterson**

**Ramona SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

The river otter is a valuable resource to the trappers of South Dakota. I am 100% in favor of our South Dakota outdoor enthusiasts being able to tag and keep the otter they catch.

---

**Jerry Herbst**

**Pukwana SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

If their numbers support the a season then go for it. Conservation efforts have supported and expanded wildlife greatly over the years. One thing you can bet on is the antis did nothing to help really, just a thorn in the side of success.

---

**Anne Fuehrer**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

We have worked to bring these creatures back and now you are opening them up so hunters have something else to make money on. You have given no fact based reasoning to remove protections for otters. Aren't these otters sacred to the Lakota? You continue to cater to the trump administrations need to remove protections for wildlife. All to the detriment of our ecosystems.

---

**Randy Ristesund**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Not for killing for fun

---

**Kim Benning**

**Redfield SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Trapping is inhumane and should be outlawed. How can anyone with any humanity in their body think trapping is good. Those poor animals suffer and die a horrific death. Save the otters!

---

**Sharon Rose**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Inhumane, let's work on getting SD back on track since COVID and leave indigenious wildlife alone.

---

**Peggy Mann**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Leave the River otter alone. Stop killing.

---

**Jeanie Dumire**

**Hot Springs SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please stop killing these animals

---

**Theresa Giannavola**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I do not agree with trapping this animal or any animal for that matter, nor removing it from protected status. Most states have banned trapping in this century. We just got them back in our state and they pose no threat to farmers. Leave them alone and let nature be wild.

---

**Rochelle Von Eye**

**Plankinton SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Must we kill every living creature? I live on a farm and appreciate nature. I do not think it is necessary to kill for the sake of killing. ??????????????

---

**Nancy Smidt**

**Sturgis SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

It is so rare to see an otter in SD, I have actually only seen 1 in the last 20 years I have paddled our creeks and rivers. It was such a mind blowing honor to have seen him. Please do not trap these beautiful, fun loving creatures. They are a true delight to see.

---

**Darlene Finberg**

**Redfield SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

PLEASE leave them alone

---

**Kathy Mills**

**Custer SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Due we really need to trap, hunt, everything in this state. Can't be an environment first state? Next we will be paying 10 bucks a paw for otters! I understand, having come from a hunting family but we refuse to provide better habitats..just bounty and shoot.

---

**Tammy Jungen**

**Waterown SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The relatively rare population of river otter in SD must be protected. I strongly oppose the opening of a trapping season. The native population of them is not known. Also, with clean water needs, the population is unlikely grow due the deplorable conditions of SD waterways.

It is unconscionable to even consider a trapping season at this time with so little know of the current population and health of this reintroduced native species.

If this comes from a financial aspect, you would draw more tourism business by watching them, not trapping them.

Please do not support this plan.

---

**Klara Parks**

**Piedmont SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Exactly what is wrong with this state??? I very much oppose what appears to be a plan to get rid of River otters once again. It seems the wonton and unnecessary killing of wildlife in this state is just business as usual. We have to endure a second year of the horrible and cruel Nest Predator program and now this. I am a life long resident of this state and have never been ashamed of that until now. What a sad sorry state.

---

**Tammie Mohr**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I do not support the killing of these rare and precious River Otters. There are plenty of other opportunities for "families to get outside" and there are more conservation-focused ways and more economical ways to generate income; such as through education tours and encounter experiences. Fund preservation for once.

---

**Tasha Redday**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

This is wrong. You just spent so much time trying to bring these guys back! Now you are going to allow trappers to bring their numbers to an all time low again. Stop this insanity!

---

**David Goronja**

**Howard SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Save the otters

---

**Kim Duke**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please leave the river otters alone. They are so helpful to the environment. They are listed as a protected species for a reason. If this happens you will just be killing harmless but yet very important animals. Trapping of any kind is so cruel. PLEASE do not delist the river otters!!

---

**Dana Zoelle**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Save the Otters!!

---

**Cristin Holm**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please continue to protect the river otter!

---

**Dianna Torson**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Families should go outside to bike, hike, horseback ride and other non-lethal activities. Killing these beautiful creatures is immoral!

---

**Suzanne Hodges**

**Rancho Cordova CA**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Historically, river otters were, and still are, a sacred species for us as Lakota people, as well as for many indigenous nations in North America. In the annals of Societies of the Plains Indians, the river otter is shown to be held in the highest esteem, with more than 40 references found throughout the documentation,"Historically, river otters were, and still are, a sacred species for us as Lakota people, as well as for many indigenous nations in North America. In the annals of Societies of the Plains Indians, the river otter is shown to be held in the highest esteem.

---

**Juie Berry**

**Vermillion SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

The river otter is a very important animal for healthy wetlands, (and other habitats). It took a lot of work to get these river otters here, and it is important for the beauty of this state that they stay here.

---

**Dana Loseke**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Shaun Grassel**

**Reliance SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I would hope that the GFP would only allow harvest in areas where otters are abundant, such as the James River and Big Sioux River watersheds. I do not oppose otter trapping in eastern SD but I do have concerns about the impacts of harvesting otters from small, disjunct populations that might occur along or west of the Missouri River. I am not in favor of a statewide season. Please leave the counties along the Missouri River and all other west river counties closed.

---

**Julie Hagen**

**Britton SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose having a river otter season. This mammal would be a pleasure to see and I can't imagine why they would need a hunting season. If you don't even have an accurate account why would you feel you could kill any. I strongly disagree with your over ruling of public comment.

---

**Kenifer Meadows**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Otters are essential to the ecosystem balance and keeping the rivers healthy and clean. Besides the obvious moral benefit of healthy waterways, there are financial benefits as well.

South Dakota's tourism relies on natural attractions. Covid is driving people outdoors because it is one of the only safe places to play. This means that SD's outdoor adventures will only increase in the next few years.

Decaying the waterways will decrease the value to the majority of river goers for the limited benefit of the few.

---

**Christina Yates**

**Jackson OH**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose trapping river otter. They are a protected species and should remain so.

---

**Ray Starling**

**Wilmington NC**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

These are an endangered species. Their population and cultural value is more important than pelts.

---

**Michael Kurtz**

**Lower Brule SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Protect the otter, save the ones that are free. Otters are sacred to the Lakota, let them live freely. At this time the population needs to continue to increase. No trapping.

---

**Gavin Lammers**

**Hartington NE**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I would suggest moving the season start date to make sure that threat from the river otter is prime

---

**Paul Lepisto**

**Pierre SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please see the attached comments from the South Dakota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America.

---

**Susan Braunstein**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I don't believe there is significant scientific data to support the river otter season. Please just leave the otters to thrive in their recovery. It is not humane or necessary on any level.

---

**Gena Parkhurst**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Please do not create a river otter hunting season. After being wiped out by European immigrants, the otters were re-introduced by the Santee Sioux Tribe's initiative. It is far too early for a hunting season. These creatures are just beginning to re-populate South Dakota's waterways.

Expand otter habitat to the Black Hills and other areas.

Incidental take in beaver kills is unacceptable and should not be legitimized by a hunting season. Create a contest for inventors to figure out how to keep otters out of beaver traps.

Thank you for considering these comments.

---

## Use of Parks and Public lands

---

**James Van Loan**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

After reserving a Big Sioux campsite for \$55 I cancelled it 18 days before the reservation and was charged \$27.50. If you think this is a way to attract visitors by charging 50% cancellation fee it is nothing a private campground could do. It is excessive!!!!

---

**Dan Kotab**

**Dante SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Robert Bennett**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Commenting regarding YST fee exemption

I do not support this. Why not allow free entrance for everyone to have greater outdoor recreation and more education opportunities that the park provides? Why only the YST? Why not everyone like it used to be?

---

**Corey Irwin**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

They are a "sovereign nation" if they want to be involved in state functions then they should pay for their park entrance just like the rest of us. If they want to be involved in any of the joys of the river and its activities then they should pay what we pay or they should find an area that is on "their lands" aka a true reservation. The area that is called the Yankton reservation is not an actual reservation. Every member should be required to pay for their entrance because they are part of this STATE.

---

**Ryan Frederick**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am writing in regards to the state giving the tribes free passes into the state parks. Why as tax paying individuals do we need to pick up the extra money that they get for free. We pay to enter and to use these areas, so should everyone else, including the natives. This is not a right, this is a privilege we pay for!! Please keep it fair to everyone, not just a few!!

---

**Karen Soulek**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Regarding no-fee access provided to Yankton Sioux Tribal members, we feel that the South Dakota STATE Parks should be equally accessible to all residents regardless of who you are. The fees are already reasonable and provide access for an entire year to ALL state parks, so we do not feel that there should be an extra exemption to Tribal members - especially since the GFP already grants an exemption for religious purposes. Every entrance fee obtained is necessary to pay for the costs of upkeep and yearly maintenance of the State Parks.

---

**Marsha Johnson**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Ridiculous!!! I work hard for my income and pay my taxes!!! Why would you ever think this is even right!! Tired of giving giving and giving!!!! Not even an option! Why would I have to pay to use state facilities and someone else doesn't!!! Because they are native! No thought we were all equal, then treat them that way!!

---

**Greg Hubbard**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Yankton Sioux Tribe members free park usage around Pickstown. NO WAY!! I live along the river in that area and regularly have to pick up bags & bags of trash left by Tribal members. Many do not respect the environment and should be given benefits other residents won't have. Your park employees will be picking up dirty diapers, liquor bottles, food wrappers, etc.

---

**John Kokesh**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I'm not Native American and I live in the bounds of the Yankton Sioux Reservation so based on my heritage my family's is being discriminated against. The SDGFP must not be concerned about creating "greater access" for my family and is basing that discriminating decision off our race/religion and that is exactly what we are allowing to divide our country at this present time. Do not pass this if you truly believe in equality for all American, native or otherwise.

---

**Jmaes Stone**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in support of the proposed park entrance fee exemption for Yankton Sioux Tribal members. I suggest adding the White Swan Use Area.

---

**Jonelle Drapeau**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Greetings, I would like to encourage the committee to vote full access for the Yankton Sioux Tribe and it's members. This would be a huge step forward in mending relationships between the state and the tribes. I can see this action of solidarity gaining full support by all parties and gaining national headlines as they see a move to acknowledging the importance of water to the Native American culture and peoples. My hats off to all of you that are involved in such proposal and the consideration of the proposal. Thank you.

---

**Jonelle Meyer**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a non-enrolled member of any tribe, I think that Tribal members should be able to access the parks at no cost. They take pride in the care and love for water and see it as something very sacred. I feel that this kind of actions would benefit the relationship between state and tribal government.

---

**Alexis Rouse**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Helen Fischer**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Trinia Lerew**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support giving all Yankton Sioux Ihanktowan members free park passes into and around the Pickstown recreation areas. My family and I have been swimming, fishing, picnicking in and around these places our whole lives. I grew up on the river, going to the river and would appreciate having the right to do so without having to pay a fee or a fine. Thank you for your time and consideration.

---

**Etraya Olson**

**Vermillion SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Garrett Cournoyer**

**Vermilion SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Chereas Houseman**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am a member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe and I fully support and encourage the free full access to the Ft. Randall Dam beached & recreational areas for all Yankton Sioux tribal members. I personally grew up in the area and know the joy the river brings to many Native American families. It is very much beloved by the YST people. Our ancestors have utilized the river long before GFP ever became established and think it's a great idea for both the YST and GFP to move in a positive direction of honoring the aboriginal people of the land. I believe it would improve the lively hood and happiness of all tribal members.  
-Chereas Houseman

---

**Derrick Marks**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

This is a great step to state tribal relations and acknowledgment of the native people to the region.

---

**Nancy Denney**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

What about fishing licenses... due to all the floodings last year..went once. There's about 15 in my family that get one every year.?

---

**Terri Garvey**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

This would be a HUGE step forward in mending state/tribal relations. I support passing the motion to allow tribal members access without requiring a payment.

---

**Shawn Perkinas**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I fully support allowing the Yankton Sioux members free access. (non-enrolled member)

---

**Ramona Drapeau**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

My family and I enjoy fishing and some times it's difficult for every family member to purchase a pass so we end up not being able to fish. I vote to allow free passes for tribal members.

---

**Colton Drapeau**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I would like to see the tribe be allowed free river access.



SOUTH DAKOTA  
DIVISION

# The Izaak Walton League of America

DEFENDERS OF SOIL, AIR, WOODS, WATERS, AND WILDLIFE

June 18, 2020

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department  
523 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501

Re: Annual Pheasant Brood Survey

Secretary Hepler, Commissioners Jensen, Bies, Boyd, Locken, Olson, Sharp, Spring and Whitmyre,

The South Dakota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America (Division) wishes to express our anguish and extreme disappointment in your recent decision to discontinue the annual pheasant brood survey. The League and its members firmly believe in science-based, common sense decisions. We're asking you to reconsider the decision to end this annual scientific survey conducted every year since 1949.

We respectfully request you reinstate the survey and conduct it this summer and every year in the future.

The Game, Fish and Parks Department (GFP) historically has based nearly everything it does on the best available science. It conducts activities that are in the best interest of landowners, hunters and anglers - resident and nonresident - who fund most of the operations of the GFP."

The Division is also very troubled that the decision to stop conducting the survey, which costs about \$90,000 per year, was reached without accepting any public comment. We do not see that as serving the needs of your "customers".

If the decision to eliminate the pheasant brood survey was based on budgetary reasons, we would ask that the nest predator bounty program, which has no scientific support, be cancelled instead. A portion of the \$250,000 earmarked for predator tails could be re-appropriated to conduct the pheasant survey. Years of research show that any program failing to reduce predator levels below their annual mortality rate has no scientific merit. As currently implemented, the nest predator bounty program does not include a youth trapping education component. Without that, we feel it is not a good use of valuable sportsmen's dollars.

Recent results from the summer brood survey have revealed very troubling numbers. While South Dakota can still claim to be "the pheasant capital of the world" and always has the best pheasant hunting opportunities, recent surveys have shown significantly lower populations. We believe the low numbers directly reflect the ongoing loss of critical nesting and wintering habitat across the state.

The Division believes the brood survey is an invaluable tool needed to track population trends as well as changes in the condition of year-round habitats required by pheasants. The survey determines what areas have lower numbers and where quality habitat development, on both public and private land, must occur.

The summer brood survey is also valuable as it provides a real sense for the status of other wildlife species and the condition of crops in the county for the year. The data collected over the long history of this survey is important. The loss of this annual data cannot be recovered once time passes. The GFP would be left just guessing on population numbers without any concrete data. If the brood survey is not conducted it could take years for GFP to get back on track with pheasant population estimates and trends.

The South Dakota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America asks you to reconsider your decision to end the annual summer pheasant brood survey. Please reinstate it as an annual scientific research activity, and don't take the science out of South Dakota pheasant management. The pheasant means too much to this state, the people who hunt it and those who depend on it for their livelihood.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly Kistner".

Kelly Kistner

National IWLA President and President of the South Dakota Division of the IWLA

603 Lakeshore Drive

McCook Lake, SD 57049

605-232-2030 (H) – 712-490-1726 (C)

[iwlasdpresident@outlook.com](mailto:iwlasdpresident@outlook.com)

June 8, 2020

Kelly Hepler, Secretary and Game, Fish & Parks Commission  
South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department  
523 E. Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Secretary Hepler and Commissioners:

Re: *Friends of the Big Sioux River* Comments on the River Otter Management Plan and de-listing the otter from its “threatened” status

Friends of the Big Sioux River is an organization working to improve water quality and clean up the Big Sioux River and other waterways in the Big Sioux watershed. We also work to increase people’s interest in the outdoors. The enhancement of wildlife habitat in the watershed is another objective. Our members and friends have removed barb wire fences, cleaned out trash dumps, planted countless trees, and pulled invasive species from buckthorn to garlic mustard to help improve the flora and fauna of South Dakota’s state parks.

This past weekend we organized a clean-up with the Big Sioux Recreation Area Park Managers, John Dummer and Luke Dreckman, to start the removal of tons of trash from a popular trail system in that recreation area that was damaged by two years of flooding. We are squeezing this clean-up in between the water quality monitoring we are doing in the Split Rock Creek watershed to help identify pollution sources which contaminate the creek as it flows through Palisades State Park. We have been doing water testing for several years at another fifteen sites, including state park access areas such as the Big Sioux Recreation Area and Newton Hills, as well as Lake Alvin and Lake Lakota.

We have tremendous respect for the work done by the South Dakota GF&P. We realize that without the state park system many residents in eastern South Dakota would have few places to enjoy nature. We also know that much of this work is accomplished on thin budgets, and that revenues are shrinking as fewer people are involved in hunting. It is important that GF&P recognizes a shift in people’s uses of the outdoors from harvesting wildlife to simply enjoying the experience of observing wild birds and animals. As our outdoor spaces shrink, and as our human footprint expands, more people are embracing wild animals as creatures that add beauty and fascination to their outdoor experiences and to their lives. We believe that the enjoyment of seeing living creatures is something future generations deserve to enjoy, as well.

There is no greater representation of the fascination and joy in observing wildlife than watching a river otter! The otter is an iconic symbol of river wildlife, and it also represents a species that is playful and communal and fun to watch. Unfortunately, it is difficult to observe them in South Dakota because there are not very many of them here. As you know, hunting, trapping and the degradation of waterways and wetlands obliterated our state’s otter population. By 1977, it

was postulated that this species might be extinct in our state. Through the next several decades things did not improve, as sightings were extremely rare. Fortunately, the Flandreau Santee Sioux tribe introduced 38 otters on the Big Sioux River in Moody County in 1998 and 1999. Scientists have identified the Big Sioux River as possessing the best potential for otter habitat in the entire state.

We now know that from this group of otters introduced on the Big Sioux River have spread out and are now residing on three waterways in eastern South Dakota: The lower James River, the Vermillion River, and the Big Sioux River. By 2004, otter sightings in the entire state of South Dakota climbed to 22. By 2012, sightings rose to 46. This increase can be traced to the re-introduction efforts by the Flandreau Sioux tribe.

We note that a “sighting” might be simply observing scat or tracks or an otter slide in the snow, in addition to an actual animal sighting or finding an incidental catch by a trapper or an animal killed by a vehicle.

Two years ago, verified reports sightings of river otters in our state totaled 38. Last year that total reached 40. These are small numbers, to be sure. Considering how a “sighting” is defined, does this sound like a species that is comfortably rebounding in our state? Is this the level of population resurgence that warrants a de-listing of this species? We suggest that de-listing is not a reasonable step in the recovery of this species currently.

Your agency is making the claim that otters have reached a harvestable point. A spokesperson for your agency stated that improved conditions on waterways and wetlands make de-listing possible. We would strongly argue the opposite. Wetland destruction continues, and water quality issues in waterways such as the Big Sioux River are worrisome. How successful is the state’s riparian buffer program? Habitat remains problematic. Otters continue to face major challenges caused by human beings. This de-listing adds to their challenges.

Your agency explained that for this species to be de-listed there should be confirmed reports of reproduction in three of the five watersheds within the species recovery area. Another factor, according to your agency, is that you need reports indicating satisfactory distribution. We note that over the past five years average sightings are only about 40 per year. We find this inadequate evidence that this species is prospering and no longer deserves to be protected under “threatened” designation.

Your agency’s new recommended management plan calls for an annual harvest of 15 otters per year. Already, 16 incidental otters are trapped each year. There may an increase in otter numbers in our state, but it is happening at a terribly slow pace. Consider the statistics in the following chart.

State	Square Miles	Estimated Otter Population	Annual Harvest	Otters per Square Mile
Minnesota	87,000	12,000	2,000	.14
Iowa	56,000	7,000	692 (5 yr. Avg.)	.125
Nebraska	77,000	5,000	2020 Start	.065
North Dakota	71,000	No actual data is available	20	???
South Dakota	77,000	No actual data is available	15	???

Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska have sizeable otter populations and a harvest is allowed, however, Nebraska with an estimated 5,000 otters will just start its harvest this year. Based on the surrounding states' knowledge of their otter populations, South Dakota is hardly ready for a harvest.

The research done by your agency does not support a harvest and this move is premature. The question is why have a harvest season at all? Please consider the facts that:

- Otters do not destroy crops or harm any type of livestock.
- Otters do not create burrows. They mostly use other animal dens or burrows or downed trees for homes.
- They do not cut down and damage trees nor cause any flooding of property.
- Otters do not eat upland game bird eggs, so they do not hurt pheasant populations.
- There is no real economic reason for trapping otters.

Each year our organization teaches classes at water festivals for school kids, and we also teach classes at local schools. We lead off our presentation with a video of a river otter family frolicking as they live their lives. The children are fascinated and curious where they can see an otter. Our answer is: "There may be some around the Flandreau area, but despite all the time our members spend on the Big Sioux River and other rivers and streams in eastern South Dakota we have never seen one." We also tell students that we could have more otters in our state if our state agencies would enforce and prioritize the implementation of clean water practices that would help otters thrive. Clean water is critical for otters, and our state has fallen short until recently in monitoring water quality and enforcing water standards. That unfortunate situation has been well-documented, with admissions by state leaders that funding to pursue clean water projects is scarce.

Friends of the Big Sioux River renamed its printed newsletter *The Otter*. We re-designed our logo to include an image of an otter. We did this because otters represent healthy rivers and waterways. We did it because it is an aspirational goal for our organization – we recognize that healthier waterways mean more otters. But only if otters are given a chance to thrive.

Rather than open otters to harvest and reduce protections for this important animal, we suggest your agency take steps to accomplish this following:

1. Restore clean water to our streams and lakes.
2. Require all landowners to implement riparian buffers on all lakes and streams.
3. Develop an otter monitoring program that accurately determines population thresholds in various watersheds.
4. Set up an otter monitoring team of stakeholders for each of the three main watersheds in eastern South Dakota with verified sightings reported to a GF & P web site with date and location. This can be followed up with verification by a GF & P wildlife specialist.
5. Set a goal of reaching .075 otter per square mile before an eastern watershed is open to a harvest. This is at the low end of otters per square mile compared to other states. Based on the relative size of the watersheds here are our recommendations:

Watershed	Sq. Miles	Goal per Sq. Mile	Needed Otter Population
James	14,700	.075	<b>1,100</b>
Big Sioux	5,400	.075	<b>400</b>
Vermillion	2,700	.075	<b>200</b>
Remaining Area	54,000	.005	<b>270</b>
Total	77,000		<b>2,000</b>

We believe GF&P should recognize the advantage of drawing people to the outdoors by protecting the otter from any harvest. There are far more people and children who admire and appreciate the remarkable otter than there are who want to trap this animal.

We suggest that the public disapproves your agency permitting the trapping of otters and de-listing them considering current numbers. We advise you to work on behalf of all the people in South Dakota who appreciate wildlife. They far outnumber those who wish to trap. We believe it is premature to de-list the otter from its threatened status. Forty sightings through the entire state is hardly a reason to celebrate. It is, however, a reason to focus more attention on doing what it takes to restore otters to our landscape. Doing this sort of work is how an agency earns its keep. It is what you should be doing. We urge you to reverse this decision.

Sincerely,

Travis Entenman  
Director  
Friends of the Big Sioux River



SOUTH DAKOTA  
DIVISION

# The Izaak Walton League of America

DEFENDERS OF SOIL, AIR, WOODS, WATERS, AND WILDLIFE

June 18, 2020

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission  
523 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Commissioners,

The South Dakota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America (Division) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the proposed river otter trapping season. This proposal would establish a state-wide river otter trapping season in November and December or until 15 otters are trapped and reported to the Game, Fish and Parks Department (GFP).

While the Division supports responsible trapping and the sustainable harvest of furbearers, we strongly oppose this proposal. We ask the commission to reject it as we believe this goes too far, too fast for this specie.

The commission took two steps during your May meeting. First, voting to delist the river otter then, approving the development of this proposal. The Division believes this marked the first time in history that a governing game and fish body voted to delist, and then approved development of a harvest season on that specie during the same meeting. Again, we believe, this is going too far, too fast.

The state's river otter management plan is currently undergoing revision. The existing plan states otters are difficult to monitor thus making development of a suitable monitoring program challenging. The Division agrees with the GFP's stance that a healthy, growing population of river otters would be welcomed in watersheds across our state.

South Dakota's current population of river otters emanated from a reintroduction effort. The reintroduction was conducted by the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe in Moody County along the Big Sioux River in 1998 and 1999.

Current research and reports show much of the suitable otter habitat and most of the documented sighting are in watersheds in extreme eastern and northeastern South Dakota. We believe this makes opening even a very limited state-wide season extremely premature.

Data shows the population of river otter in the western two thirds of the state is either very low or non-existent. The Division is concerned the current relatively small population of otters could not withstand even a "limited" harvest without suffering a major setback. This at the same time the GFP wants to see this specie expand its range across the state.

The reason given by GFP for the establishing the proposed limited trapping season is the department has been getting about 15 or 16 incidentally taken otters in each of the last five years. These animals were mostly taken in the beaver trapping season.

The Division is very concerned the same level of incidental take that has occurred will continue. That incidental take, coupled with this proposed state-wide trapping season, could possibly double the actual annual harvest of river otters in the state. This added harvest could occur before GFP could get information out to trappers announcing the season is over when the proposed 15 river otters allowed in this proposal are harvested. The potential higher harvest would result in lowering, not expanding, the state's river otter population.

The existing management plan states otters require high water quality and access to year-round open water to survive and successfully reproduce. The Division is concerned that increased surface and tile drainage and grassland conversion is contributing to a decline in water quality in many of the state's watersheds. This, combined with the ongoing riparian habitat loss and the fluctuating water levels due to our highly varied climate, makes accurately predicting long-term otter population growth extremely difficult.

Before a season for river otters is considered in South Dakota the Division asks the GFP to fully address the following:

- Research possible impacts of agricultural run-off on otters
- Develop a peer reviewed otter monitoring program
- Establish peer reviewed otter survey methods to accurately determine population
- Develop peer reviewed otter population goals and objectives and metrics on how they can be achieved
- Methodology to track otter reproduction and population movements
- Coordination of all future otter management with agencies, tribes and other stakeholders
- An outreach plan to inform trappers on ways to avoid incidental otter catches
- A public outreach program to educate the public about river otters

Until these steps are implemented, the South Dakota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America respectfully requests that the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission reject this and all other otter trapping proposals.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Kelly Kistner

National IWLA President and President of the South Dakota Division of the IWLA  
603 Lakeshore Drive  
McCook Lake, SD 57049  
605-232-2030 (H) – 712-490-1726 (C)  
[iwlasdpresident@outlook.com](mailto:iwlasdpresident@outlook.com)

# Public Comments

## Other

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**Jim Shurts**

**Madision WI**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Thank you for sharing the Tourism/GFP marketing plan; the proposed marketing plan looks good. Increasing hunter numbers is very important for many reasons and is a problem nation-wide. I am one of those traditionalists, though it seems I've aged out of the listed age group. :-) I am concerned, however, with the decision to discontinue the annual brood count. It may not be used to manage pheasant populations or to set the season structure and bag limits, but it does provide important information to out-of-state hunters like me. Poor brood counts factor in to whether or not my hunting partner (who lives in Massachusetts) and I will make the trip. He and I have certainly long reached the point in our hunting lives where the number of birds bagged is low on the list defining success. But that being said we do want to know that putting in our efforts of walking/hunting the land with the dogs will have a good chance of putting up birds. Brood counts is one of the pieces of information we use to determine that. Obviously weather and the price of ethanol corn are major factors in pheasant populations, and those don't need brood counts to be ascertained. But we still like our brood counts.

Thanks for listening and stay well.

---

**Greg Compson**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

In response to the news story that pheasant numbers will no longer be released, one has to wonder why. I know why. I have been hunting and fishing in South Dakota since the late 60's. The last 10 or more years have been dismal for your average pheasant hunter in South Dakota. As well as waterfowling . Habitat is mostly gone. Commercial hunting is now the norm. Average folks cannot afford booked hunting trips. Permission to access private land is hard to come by. Land owners are looking to maximise their incomes from guided hunts. I can't blame them for that. However, public lands are vast in some cases prohibiting reasonable access unless you are young and fit for major trekking. Others are so small that there is no point putting in an effort. Young people have little or no interest in hunting. Political correctness, lack of parental enthusiasm, cost, are surely the demise of this great sport. How sad. The experiences my dad and I had, along with those times I enjoyed with my sons and family are distant memories. Times are changing I guess. Ditches are mowed down, land is tilled and planted from fenceline to fenceline. Rural folks give you the stink eye or confront you when trying to hunt right of ways. Who needs it? It's pretty much a big hassle hunting anymore. It's done for the average guy in my opinion.

---

**William Miller**

**Brandon SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I would like to write in opposition to the ban on the use of high power rifles to hunt spring, west river turkey on private land. Since the last fatal incident was in 1999 in the black hills and not on the wide open prairie it would seem you're trying to fix something that isn't broken. As a senior citizen I have appreciated the commission's efforts to make hunting more pleasurable for us. Two rulings come to mind. Allowing lighted sight pins on bows and lowering the poundage to hunt big game to 30lbs. Reinstating the use of high power rifles would be another way to increase success when hunting west river turkeys on private land. A sentence in red on the license application reminding hunters to be sure of their target would go a long way toward promoting safety. Please reconsider your ban on the use of high power rifles to hunt west river turkey on private land.

---

**Randy Thaler**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I would like my free access permit to the Missouri River also. As a resident of Charles Mix County which Yankton Sioux Tribal Members are residents of also, I do not have access to the Missouri River and should not have to purchase a permit to use the boat ramps. Actually the Tribe has more access than I as they own land that borders the river and could put in their own boat ramp.

---

**Jennifer Swanson**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am very opposed to the nest predator bounty program. What is going to control the pests that these animals naturally control, i.e. wood ticks..?

---

**Ethel Cournoyer**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the approval to waive the required pass for members of the Yankton Sioux Tribe around the area of the Fort Randall Dam. The river is necessary to Indigenous culture and wellbeing in all areas.

---

**Gregg Yonkovich**

**Aberdeen SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Extremely disappointed to learn GF&P is discontinuing brood survey's. We've consistently had this data for nearly 100 years, and now we've decided to stop? I'd understand if it were a budgetary issue, but we're stopping because we don't want people to know if bird numbers are down? Instead we're intending to hope folks come to our State with no information, and hope they aren't pissed if they don't find birds? Also, how will we know if habitat and other programs are making a difference? If you're relying on hunter surveys, you're making a huge mistake. Please consider reinstating the brood survey, and figure out a better way to disseminate the information.

## Use of Parks and Public lands

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**Irene Provost**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think this will be a great opportunity for everyone.

---

**Michael Holly**

**Belden NE**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

You need to open the area below Gavins Point dam to non resident archery paddlefish i.e. the same are all others get to use. The few non resident tags that you do give out surely are not going to be detrimental to the fishery. I will no longer apply for an archery tag in SD, because during "normal" summer flow your area open to archers is almost void of paddlefish. I would like to hear the reasoning behind you closing this area.

---

**Valerie Habben**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Yankton Sioux tribal members should b waived fees and fort Randall dam rec areas in my opinion. Thank you

---

**Dawn Hope**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Yankton Sioux Tribal member

---

**Gayle Hayward**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I'm in full support of members of the Yankton Sioux Tribe being able to access the parks without paying admission.

---

**Kip Spotted Eagle**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

My name is Kip Spotted Eagle and I am in support of the State of South Dakota adhering to the 1851 and 1858 treaties between the Yankton Sioux and the United States Government. Our people never gave up their treaty rights to the use of the River. I believe other tribes exercise There usufructuary fishing and hunting rights as well as uninhibited access to the rivers. Please understand the Tribes are nations that do not need you to recognize their rights to the river but to adhere to the treaty rights we are promised.

---

**Greg Hayward**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the proposal for YST members to have free access to the river through the parks.

---

**Jason Dion**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think we as a sovereign nation should have free camping

---

**Spiritdreamer French**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

# Public Comments

## Administrative Rules Review

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**Georgine Young**

**Huron SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I would like to see where we are given the opportunity of free fishing,camping and hunting. I believe we had free fishing before but tht was taken away.

---

**Nancy Hilding**

**Black Hawk SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Nancy Hilding  
President  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

This is a comment on changes to beaver trapping seasons, being proposed to make beaver seasons more consistent. We think you are trying to make all beaver trapping start on November 1st. We think this leaves other season inconsistencies. The East River beaver season is 6 months, the Black Hills Beaver season is 3 months and the West River beaver season is 365 days. River otters are incidentally trapped in beaver traps. 365 days of beaver trapping is given as a reason it would be difficult to re-introduce otters West River. The reason for this longer West River season is alleged to be, that West River ranchers complain more about "conflict" beavers. Why not require them to apply for permit to take a "conflict" beaver, as provided in SDCL 41-8-23, rather than have year long trapping?  
Why not make the East-West River seasons match and make both of them 6 months. Why not make trapping on all public lands three months later in the winter, like the Black Hills National Forest. Beavers provide for habitat for many other species and federal and state public lands are often supposed to be managed at least in part for wildlife and water quality/quantity.

## Fall Turkey

---

**Pat Malcomb**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I oppose shutting down Tripp County for fall turkey hunting there are plenty of birds to support giving some tags out. If you think its an issue make them male turkey tags.

---

**James Elsing**

**Lemmon SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Wolfgang & Kathleen Schmidt**

**Nemo SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

In the many years we have lived in the Black Hills, we have usually seen some turkeys in our area. This year, we have seen NONE. There are NO HENS, NO BABIES, absolutely NOTHING. We are AGAINST ANY FALL TURKEY SEASON. The numbers indicate that there is a less than 35% "success" rate. Why are you allowing a turkey hunting season when there are so few out there anymore? Does the research not tell you this should be put on hold until they increase in numbers?

## Other

---

**Paul St.Pierre**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

YST MEMBERS SHOULD GET FREE ACCESS TO THE PISCKTOWN SWIMMING AREAS.

---

**Lynn Bruguier**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Sandra Knudsen**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Support YST and access, use of river.

---

**Markayla Yellow Horse**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Andrea Archambeau**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a tribally enrolled member we are the original owners of this land, we should be given unlimited free access for eternity. This is our home. Visitors should have to pay if they want access and have no right to comment on whether we gain free access or not.

---

**Randy Schmiesing**

**Chokio MN**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

canceling road side survey for pheasants is wrong step I wont hunt pheasants in SD with it gone

Dear Managers

Hiding your pheasants numbers will discourage new out of state hunters from coming to state. Most people want to know if they are wasting their time in going to an area that has no Pheasants. I was talking to person who only has limited amount of vacation time for hunting and said he isnt blindly going to south dakota picking a spot to hunt and waste his time.

I am a conservationist who believes how do you fix a problem . know the facts and change your habitat problem.

Not Bury your heads in the sand.

Are you going to get rid of the water fowl numbers next. I wont hunt that season if you do that also.

Your money will dry up no out of state hunters

---

**Arnold Veen**

**Milbank SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Hello, Just want to air out a problem with your West river archery deer CF196 access permitting system. The issue is as follows: I hunt the Slim Butt area of the Custer National Forest in which I need a CF196 access permit.

It requires that I buy a West River Archery Deer license before applying which I did.

I then applied for the CF196 access permit and now I received a unsuccessful draw result on my application for CF196.

I now have a West River Archery tag that I can not use for my hunting area of the Slim Butts. Money spent!! This is backwards It should allow hunters to apply for the Access Unit CF196 before buying a tag to keep from spending the money on the Achery Tags that will not allow you to hunt your chosen area in this case Custer National Forest Land (35L).

I assume there is no refunds at this point?

It probably not your problem but I will send this to your dept as well as the GFP commission also.

Thanks for listening.

ArnoldVeen, 14789 482 ave., Milbank, South Dakota, 57252

---

**Dustin Dierks**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Dear SDGFP,

I think that the Hunt for Habitat raffle is a great idea and opportunity. As a resident of SD, I am hoping to someday have the opportunity to hunt elk in my home state. I have several years of preference points, now which I pay for.

I have a father who passed away last year who had one opportunity in his lifetime to hunt elk in South Dakota, his life-long state of residence. And unfortunately, he drew during the Atlas blizzard year in the Black Hills which significantly altered his plans and life long dream.

However, he never did get the chance to hunt archery elk as he never drew a tag. Hence, I do have concerns with the opportunity you afford non residents in this raffle. For those of us who have tried many years to draw a tag, and who have observed family members do the same over a lifetime, it is difficult to comprehend the opportunity a non resident has to hunt SD elk for a \$20.00 raffle ticket.

I understand the economics involved; however, I do recommend and suggest you reevaluate. In my opinion, the difference of \$10.00 between a resident and non resident raffle opportunity for a cherished South Dakota elk tag is offensive.

Thank you

Dustin Dierks  
Sioux Falls SD

---

**Tyra Honomichl**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

It was brought to my attention that native americans should have free access to the river. I was talking to a tribal member and they have valid opinions and feelings. As you know most of the native population dont have a lot of financial resources, so to be able to help them in this way would be good for everyone. It will help build a bridge between cultural difference and build new connections with each other. With everything that is happening today with BLM movement, you would be able to support the movement. Which will also help you bring new visitors to this beautiful area which in turn gives you more business and revenue. I admit I dont know a lot about business but I know if more people visit the more money you yet. This is a win-win situation. Thank you for your time and hope to hear from you soon.

---

**Matthew Provost**

**Seattle WA**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

"As long as the water flows and the grass grows".. We know where our Motherland is.

Would you pay money to visit your birthplace?

---

**Jessi Jo**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Stefanie Morales**

**Wichita KS**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Tasheena Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Brenda Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

## River Otter Season

---

**John Hopple**

**Black Hawk SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Hello Secretary Hepler, Chairman Jesen an Commissioners.  
as President of the South Dakota Trappers Association I speak for our members in supporting the river otter season proposed by GFP. In addition I would like to add the following comments.

This was not asked for by us or proposed by us. I have read the public comments and wanted to address some attacks we have taken. This was a proposal by GFP based on science and experts in wildlife biology. There was no emotion, just facts and figures. GFP has the right to decide seasons and harvest for ALL creatures that fall under its purview. As such this is much the same as setting the west river deer season or antelope season dates and number of tags. Research, facts and figures are used to come to those decisions. It is not made by the hunters but by the experts at GFP who are funded by sportsman's tax dollars. We trust these folks to provide this information on all other species why the backlash for this one animal? Just as some seasons/harvest limits for certain species are changed every year so may the river otter be in future seasons. It is the right of GFP to manage the wildlife and should be so unabated. So in conclusion, Yes the SDTA strongly supports the GFP's decision to establish an otter season based on the information presented by its experts who do these studies and analyzing of facts/figures emotion free every day.

Thank You

John Hopple

SDTA President

---

**Alan Lekness**

**Sisseton SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Cybele Knowles**

**Tucson AZ**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Attached please find 282 comments from supporters of the Center for Biological Diversity urging you to withdraw plans for trapping of South Dakota's tiny river otter population. Thank you for your attention.

---

**Steven Peterson**

**Ramona SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Having an otter season for the outdoorsmen of South Dakota is a great step forward. The otter population in the state has grown significantly and steadily since their first release. I have been trapping in South Dakota for 47 years. The opportunity to catch my first otter in the state would be a unforgettable experience.

---

**Vince Logue**

**Oelrichs SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am the president of the WSDFHA and our membership is between 175 and 200 members. I am supporting this proposal for the season on river otter. I believe it is vital as a viable control plan to manage the increase in the river otter population in South Dakota.

---

**Kelsey Vig**

**Opal SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in support of a river otter season as a plan ready in place to help manage a balanced habitat for fish populations. Wildlife management is crucial for the health of all species.

---

**Jacob Helms**

**Reva SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think trapping the River otters would be beneficial not only for the state but also the public. We have to control the numbers or the population will get way out of hand and once it's out of hand it's hard to come back from that.

---

**Katie Helms**

**Reva SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am a firm believer in keeping animals at a controllable level.

---

**Kathleen Schmidt**

**Nemo SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

There are so few otters in the Black Hills that there they should be protected for the future. There should be no trapping season on these wonderful little creatures. Please let them live so that they may increase in numbers so we do not lose this endangered species.

---

**Brian Gundvaldson**

**Egan SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in full support of season. I believe we have the otters and would be nice if trappers could keep the incidentals that are already being caught, and use the resource to it's full potential.

---

**Vickie Hauge**

**Deadwood SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am writing to question why there is a trapping season for the River Otter in the West of the Missouri River? We have not seen the otter here since 2018. I do also question The GFP management reasoning when their estimate of possibly 40 Otters in the whole state of South Dakota. 40 is a very small number & when they are trapped out, so you introduce them back so that 10 years later, they get trapped again? Our Otters are being killed accidentally in traps that are set out for other animals all ready. The methods used to count these endangered animals is in my view, leaves much to be desired. Really not knowing if there are even 40 out there, it would be prudent for you to stop this trapping season all together. The trappers in South Dakota are given what ever they want & the non trappers who are amazed by these beautiful creatures in our state, have to live with it. Do you represent all South Dakotans? I think not!  
Please reconsider this & show is that we are all being represented by you.

Thank you.

Vickie Hauge  
Deadwood

---

**Nancy Hilding**

**Black Hawk, SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Nancy Hilding  
President  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society  
Black Hawk, SD

Dear GFP Commission

We are attaching our first letter in opposition to the northern river otter trapping season. Our first letter discusses how the otter delisting was done illegally, due to violation of public notice requirements. You would be tiering a trapping season to an illegal delisting rule and we advise against doing that.

We are also attaching 5 documents to our letter - These attachment's will include

1. Native Sun News Article on River Otters
2. 2006 Public Notice of December's GFP Commission Meeting
3. 2020 Public Notice of May's GFP Commission Meeting
4. List of Statutes for Chapter 1-26
5. List of Statutes for Chapter 34A-8

However your portal only allows one attachment per comment, thus I must use 5 postings to attach 5 attachments.

---

**Nancy Hilding**

**Black Hawk, SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am submitting an attachment to our first letter

---

**Nancy Hilding**

**Black Hawk, SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Nancy Hilding  
President  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

I am submitting an attachment to our previous letter

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**Nancy Hilding**

**Black Hawk, SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Nancy Hilding  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

I am submitting attachments to our first letter.  
One at a time

---

**Nancy Hilding**

**Black Hawk, SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Nancy Hilding  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

I am submitting attachments to our first letter

---

**Nancy Hilding**

**Black Hawk SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Nancy Hilding  
President  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

We are submitting our first comment letter on the river otter trapping season. I thought I had sent it already, but I have not yet gotten a receipt for it, thus for safety I send it again.

This is a comment letter discussing how the delisting of the river otter was done illegally, as you did not provide the required 30 days public notice. We think it improper to tier a trapping season to an illegal delisting rule. This letter has 5 attachments. We already sent 4 of them and got receipts for those. We could not successfully send a 5th attachment, so we e-mailed it to Rachel Comes. The attachments are about

1. Native Sun News Article on River Otters
2. 2006 Public Notice of December's GFP Commission Meeting
3. 2020 Public Notice of May's GFP Commission Meeting
4. List of Statutes for Chapter 1-26
5. List of Statutes for Chapter 34A-8

---

**Wendy Luedke**

**Lead SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I am against otter delisting & the delisting was not done procedurally (inadequate public notice)

2. I would like otter season to be postponed until we have a higher number of otters in SD & otters are recovered in both east & west river.

3. I would like the trapping area be limited to a smaller area and not apply to west river and not apply along the Missouri River.

4 There should be West River otter reintroduction project(s), especially to La Creek NWR before any West River trapping.

5. Otters are killed accidentally in beaver, raccoon and mink traps. As a result the beaver trapping season in West River should be shortened.. The current West River season - except Black Hills - is 365 days, East River season is 6 months. The Black Hills Season is 3 months. The reason for this longer west river season is alleged that West River ranchers complain more about "conflict" beavers. Why not require them to apply for permit to take a "conflict" beaver, as provided in SDCL 41-8-23, rather than have year long trapping?

6. All beaver traps that are not set during an otter season, should have the trip wire off to the side, rendering them less likely to incidentally take otter.

7. Any otter taken by humans..incidental trapping, vehicle kills, be counted against the next season's "harvest limit".

8. The 2020 SD Otter Management Plan...has inadequate information in it.

9. The wildlife watchers, photographers & hikers make up a much larger sector of the population and their wildlife enjoyment should be considered and given respect by SD GFP. And enough otters should be kept to expand to West River . Please recognize that viewing otters provides the benefits to quality of life for residents and reasons to visit for tourists.

10. I would like an actual otter monitoring plan in place before beginning otter trapping, this has not been done yet.

11. In doing so, you should ask for consultation with SD Tribes and USFWS.

---

**Julie Anderson**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

To: SDGF&P regarding 2020-2029 River Otter Management Plan

I object to this plan because of the reason for its inception, which is to pay trappers for the pelts of the otters inadvertently killed in beaver traps. The population does not warrant delisting, nor are the population numbers given reliable. GF&P admits monitoring otters is difficult, and a better system will eventually be developed. A reliable monitoring system should be established before any thought is given to delisting. There should also be efforts made to prevent otters from falling victim to beaver traps by moving the trap trigger. This would alleviate the need for delisting in the first place. To subject otters to excruciating pain and suffering and risk the extinction of the species in this state to put money into the pockets of a few is cruel, foolhardy and unnecessary.

The time and opportunity has come for this agency to address the majority of people who want to see wildlife in their natural habitat. SDGF&P should scrap the current plan in favor of creating and establishing a river otter tour. This is a much more profitable endeavor, as people love to watch otters, and current tours in other states charge from \$100 to \$150 per person. This would also open up opportunities for professional photography tours as well, which could bring in additional revenue. This would also provide a chance to study the river otter and its population numbers in depth, and at the same time become a reliable source of income. River Otter tours would also spur growth in the state's tourism industry by providing new jobs.

Please take this opportunity to move this agency into a new direction that will provide economic sustainability and find a whole new group of people wanting to experience South Dakota's rich wildlife heritage.

Thank You,

Julie Anderson  
845 Virginia Lane  
Rapid City, SD  
57701

---

**Nancy Hilding**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Nancy Hilding  
President  
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

I am attaching our second letter on the proposed river otter trapping season

# Use of Parks and Public lands

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**Lisa Arrow**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Agnes Nelson**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Should have free access to the River and Fishing.

---

**Shavonne Flying Hawk**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in support of the Yankton Sioux being able to utilize the Parks on the reservation. If it wasn't for the Pick Sloan Act, we would still be living by the water. Allowing our people access to lands that have been given by treaty, is vital to our nation. We already have "free" access to the Pipestone Quarry. We just show our tribal ID. I think we should only have to show tribal ID to access these areas.

---

**Amelia Parry**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Elliott Rainbow**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support this option

---

**Merna Hare**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I'm in favor of waving fees to Yankton Sioux Tribal members.

---

**Sasheen Thin Elk**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in Support of the fee waiver, because we never gave up our treaty rights. I am in support of Yankton Sioux Tribe members having the fees waived. For our tribal members, Land is more than just ground beneath our feet. We try and protect our land and water, not for us but for future generations. We have strong ties to our land and have remained resilient even when our own lands were taken from us. Conflicts over the use and ownership of Native lands are not new. Land has been at the center of virtually every significant interaction between Natives and non-Natives since the earliest days of European contact with the indigenous peoples of North America. By the 19th century, federal Indian land policies divided communal lands among individual tribal members in a proposed attempt to make them into farmers. The result instead was that struggling tribes were further dispossessed of their land. In recent decades, tribes, corporations, and the federal government have fought over control of Native land and resources in contentious protests and legal actions, This would be a good step forward for all people's involved.

---

**George Cournoyer Jr**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

We never gave up our treaty rights to the river

---

**Lois Weddell**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the waiver of fees for members of the Yankton Sioux Tribe in our local state parks at Pickstown, SD due to the fact that they were built on our tribal lands, our people were displaced due to the construction of that dam and we have never wavered in declaring our right to fish and hunt on our part of the river.

---

**Patti Mattus**

**Wsgner SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Misty Bruguier**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in support of having entrance fees waived for YST members. It feels good that this idea would even be considered & like with anything nowadays there will either be supportive opinions or rotten ones. I will be more than appreciative or thankful if this passes.

---

**Charles Hopkins**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Summer Zephier**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Etraya Olson**

**Vermillion SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Ronald Knudsen Jr**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Let us have our water rights free fishing swimming anything to do with the water

---

**Elizabeth Hughes**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Jenna Leibel**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Julie Weddell**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a member of the Yankton Sioux tribe, it has always been important to take my kids to the river and teach them its importance in our culture. Having full, open access would allow all tribal members more of an opportunity to teach our kids and to strengthen our connection with the river.

---

**Sandra Anderson**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

The treaties should be honored.

---

**Ryan Knudsen**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Mike Marshall**

**Mission SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

In support of Yankton Sioux tribe members having fees waived

---

**Jaymie Phillips**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Yankton Sioux Tribal members fee waived for parks.

---

**Celeste Reynolds**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Maria Rivas**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

In support of having the fees waived for Yankton sioux members. This is native land we're in support of. We should have never been charged a fee!

---

**Lindsey Morrow**

**Flandreau SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support having fees waved for all tribal members.

---

**Donis Drappeau**

**Vermillion SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I definitely support waiving fees for Yankton Sioux tribal members, of which I am an enrolled member.

---

**Destiny Holiday**

**Dante SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Ernest Neault LII**

**Ravinia SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I lived in this area all my life and i feel and believe it is only fair for you to let our yankton sioux tribal members use our river with cost out of our pockets .. Do to the fact that we have fought and lost many battles over land and jurisdiction with the government and. Because of that many people lost their land and homes, this river is like a piece of our home our living our way of food and enjoyment .. Why would you make us pay for what was already in our lives before this border war of our land and rivers . just to put my coin in the pocket of the gov.

---

**Nichola Leroy**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Support Yankton Sioux Tribe having the fee

---

**Bethann Standing Cloud**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

My family enjoys going to the river, we always pick up trash after ourselves and other trash that was left. We love fishing and swimming.

---

**Becky Monnens**

**Hermosa SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Support YST members having fees waived. Uphold their treaty rights to the river.

---

**Mary Kurniawan**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Support Yankton Sioux Tribal members use of public lands without need of a licence.

---

**Paula Packard**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Allowing Yankton Sioux Tribe free access to parks n recreational areas

---

**Andrew Wood**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

The free access of the SD Parks and Recreation, would give the Yankton Sioux people, great advantages of recreation, physical, mental enjoyment to share with their children.

---

**Donald Necklace**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I am a Yankton Sioux member and I feel members should be able to have full access to the parks and recreation at anytime. We should have the fee waived because we never gave up the Treaty Rights to our river. Should include fishing and camping.

---

**Aiyana Jack**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in support of Yankton Sioux Tribe members having the fees waived for fishing and hunting.

---

**Gordena Hare**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

In favor of.. thank you.

---

**Cecily Engelhart**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

In support of Yankton Sioux tribal members having fees waived, as we have never surrendered our treaty rights to access the river. Thank you very much for your consideration!

---

**Lonnie Provost**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

this land was taken from my people to built the dam. The excess land was originally suppose to go back to my people. But of course that didn't happen & now we are required to pay for access to the river. I fully support that tribal members get free access to the river to fish or other recreational activities. Honor our rights. Honor the treaties.

---

**Debbie White**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I feel it would be beneficial to have a lifeguard on duty at specific beaches, such as St. Francis beach, to assist or provide comfort for those less educated on water safety. I also think boats should not be allowed to Shore dock a boat within designated swim areas.

---

**Chelaine Knudsen**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am strongly in favor of Tribal members gaining free access to the Missouri river to exercise freely the inherent rights such as fishing & swimming as they were/are the original inhabitants of these lands. These lands were forcefully taken from them. Tribal members were removed of their family plots, their ancestral hunting & fishing grounds, and relocated for the use of the Fort Randall Dam and parks. At minimum, Tribal members should be allowed to utilize them for free. At the very minimum they should be allowed to fish & swim in the same river that their ancestors once relied on for survival. At the very minimum, we should give them the access to that connection, free of charge.

---

**Chauncey Clark**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Jason Smith**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Melissa Sanchez**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Candace Dvorak**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in support of Yankton Sioux tribal members gaining free access to the SD state parks and such.

---

**Jessica Little**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I strongly support the use of water rights as they were lhanktonwan lands before parks were even here. We as Indigenous people have the right to swim, fish and camp on our lands for free.

---

**Tara St Pierre**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Our lands were taken away from us and we were forced to be on a specified location. If we cannot utilize our own land that was our originally to begin with we shoaled at least get free access to it. Our ancestors, our land and our rights are things that got stripped away from us, allow us to at least not have to pay to access our own land.

---

**Sara Williamson**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Marissa Cournoyer**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Blaine Bruguier**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Ray Diaz**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

It is our land and we should not have to pay for fishing,camping,swimming,boating ,etc.

---

**Justina Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Its on tribal land why arent we allowed to fish for free or or any recreational activity. Some of us depend on that meat because its expensive in stores.

---

**Olivia Good Cane Milk**

**Springfield SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Vikki Eagle Bear**

**Norris SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I strongly support free access to the Missouri River for all state residents.

---

**Ronald Sully**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Please WAIVE the fee for tribal members...

---

**Alexis Rouse**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Jewel Shears**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Kathleen Bernie**

**Lawrence KS**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Victoria Holiday**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Being Native American I feel this should be one of our rights.

---

**Leah Antelope**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Victoria Johnson**

**Carthage SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Susan Doren**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

We should be able to access our own land without fees I remember growing up we didnt have to pay

---

**Sherry Hare**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I love going to the parks in pickstown, I support the free entry for Yankton Sioux tribal members

---

**Micki Gallegos**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Wayne Frederick**

**Winner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support that all Tribally enrolled members have free access to parks areas as is we never relinquished that right and to be charged for it is absurd.

---

**Deonne Tibbetts**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Summer Lunderman**

**White River SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Enrolled Tribal Members should be allowed to have free access to all state parks and public lands.

---

**Michael Williams**

**Piedmont SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Dustie Arpan**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Fawn Fields**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in support of Yankton Sioux tribal members having waived fees for use of parks.

---

**Natalie Johner**

**Winner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

With our treaty rights we should have free use and access to Parks and Public Lands.

---

**Eileen Lafferty**

**Mission SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Native Americans be allowed access with no fee at any time.

---

**Brian Tibbetts**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Carmelita Means**

**Mission SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Whitney Jones**

**Mission SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As An Enrolled Tribal member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe I say we should not have to pay to utilize these facilities

---

**Tanya Haskell**

**Okreek SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support Native Americans having free access to all state parks and state land.

---

**Michelle Aungie**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Native Americans should be able to access the rivers and parks. There are willows growing for inipis (sweats) and many medicines for health and wellness, not to mention fishing. Thank you

---

**Valene Hawk**

**Mission SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Brian Tibbetts**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Deonne Tibbetts**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

In favor of Tribal members gaining free access to the Missouri river.

---

**Brian Tibbetts**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

In favor of Tribal members gaining free access to the Missouri river.

---

**Santana Gravatt**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am strongly in favor of tribal members gaining free access to the Missouri River as they are original inhabitants of these lands.

---

**Hillary Hare**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Dave Cournoyer**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Marianne Decora**

**Mission SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Lilyann Bechen**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I believe native Americans enrolled in any Tribal affiliation should have free access into the parks.

---

**Marisa Joseph**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a lifelong resident, and member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe, I feel that free access is highly beneficial for all. We utilize the river in not only recreational/ entertainment ways, but also in conducting ceremonies, etc there. We have a bloodline connection to the river. There is a deep and sad history our previous generations lived through, as the dam was built. We remember the sacredness and connection to our relatives. It's a step forward to acknowledge the history of the area, and to understand the river is not just for fun and enjoyment, it's also a place where we pray.

---

**Shirley Lacourse Jaramillo**

**Albuquerque NM**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support free park access for enrolled Tribal members.

---

**Darrell Gunhammer**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Latasha Hrdlicka**

**Delmont SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Lionel Rich**

**Lawrence KS**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Maria Gravatt**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Hehaka Akichita Elk Soldier**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Sarah W. Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in favor of Tribal members being able to utilize the Missouri River as they are among the original inhabitants of these specific lands. It is absurd that they should have to pay for something that is their inherent right.

---

**Jonita Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Adrienne Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Native Americans should be able to access the river for free

---

**Seanne King-Mosley**

**Canistota SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the free and unrestricted use of all public parks, camping, fishing, and hunting lands by Native American members in accordance with our treaty rights. There are several Supreme Court cases that already back up these rights. Honor them.

---

**Gregory Drapeau**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Tessa St. Pierre**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Allison Renville**

**Sisseton SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

This is indian land, we shouldn't be required to pay to use it.

---

**Lacy Lapointe**

**Mission SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Native Americans should have free access to parks and public lands

---

**Jade Arrow**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I feel the natives should get in free to the rivers

---

**Bethany Siers**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am a tribal member and the use of these parks and lands were originally here for everyone to use for free. It is only right for tribes to enjoy the parks and land for no cost after the Indigenous lands were taken over and claimed by foreigners.

---

**Geneva Kazena**

**Pickstown SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Chris Snow**

**Omaha NE**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Misty Mcbride**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Please uphold treaty rights and let us have free access to the river.

---

**Teri St. Pierre**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Although I am Native American, I still oay for my permits because they are not that expensive at all and the second vehicle is at a discount price. I dont mind help funding whatever the money goes to. You guys rock!!

---

**Larry Archambeau**

**Chamberlain SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I strongly support the proposed rule change allowing Yankton Sioux Tribal members use of there land, without fee or licensing, taken for the creation of the Ft. Randall Dam and reservoir.

---

**Jaime Young**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Lyla Dion**

**Greenwood SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Darius Honomichl**

**Chamberlain SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Heather Miller**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Darci Bultje**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

.

---

**Isabel Bernie**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Jalen Bernie**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

I think the Yankton Sioux tribal members should have free access to the river for recreational and fishing/hunting purposes. The river was not only a route for travel but also ceremonial purposes and food.

---

**Tara Roaneagle**

**Lakeandes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Mara Spitzer**

**Spokane WA**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

I support parks being open and free and oppose shutting parks to public

---

**Bryan Joseph**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Jennifer Noteboom**

**Pickstown SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the waiving of usage fees for Yankton Sioux Tribal Members.

---

**Marisa Cummings**

**Sioux City IA**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Tribal members have the right to harvest and practice ceremonies on their historical and treaty lands. The state of South Dakota exists as a result of treaties. Therefore, you must honor them.

---

**Patty Blagburn**

**Sacramento CA**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Support so me and my family are able to use without any cost to them or me. Please consider opening the parks and land for all to use. Should be a right without a cost. Please consider and support.

---

**Jennifer Veilleux**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am writing in support of free Tribal Enrolled Access to all State Parks - and you should consider reparations. Charging any enrolled member a fee to enter their homelands protected by treaty is a violation of Federal Law.

---

**Gail Hubbeling**

**Greenwood SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Because of violations of Treaties with the Yankton Sioux/Ihanktonwan Dakota and continued violations of these treaties, this is one step of ratifying what the United States really owes our People, we were promised free electricity for our People while they were being flooded out of their homes, and to this day we have never received free electricity, the US government, i.e. the U.S. Corps. of Engineers has never honored our Treaties, once the lands at Pickstown were done in creating the dam, it was to be given back to the Ihanktonwan Nation/Yankton Sioux Tribe but, instead of honoring the treaty, the courts decided to give the lands to the so called city/town of Pickstown. Our People's remains were found along the shores of White Swan, and were desecrated. Imagine, the government said, we're going to take your home and there isn't anything you can do about it, even though there is a treaty/legal document saying this is your home, oh and by the way, if you don't comply with this order, we are going to take your children and if you don't give your children up, we are going to withhold the funds and annuities we promised you in a legal document called a "TREAT"

---

**Savannah Fischer**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Richard Bruguier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Tammy Valdez**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Tribal members should have free access to parks. We still retain all rights to useage of waterways and hunting and fishing. GFP should adhere to our right of useage.

---

**Denise Brooks**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support Tribal members getting park admission free. When the Corp of Engineers built the dam. Many tribal people we're displaced. The burial mounds and cemeteries we're supposed to be moved we all know that didn't work out so well. Let the Non Indian people that were living there in also.

---

**Marcella Uribe**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Becca Redlightning**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

My sisters and I pick up the trash whenever we go swimming or fishing. We respect the land.

---

**Patricia Stricker**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Clean place...

---

**Candace Jeanotte**

**Wahpeton ND**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the efforts of free access to the Missouri river for native communities sharing the boundaries, because the Picksloane Project did not consider native communities to begin with, as they flooded the native communities to benefit others.

---

**Jay Maynard**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the measure to give Yankton Sioux Tribal members free access to the local park land. I rarely use my passes but each year I purchase at least 2 if not more passes to access the river for those times my children wish to go to the river, or when relatives who are visiting want to go.

Although I would propose a slight raise in Out of State passes for the privilege of using the land , I would be willing to pay even a little more for my own passes to give YST members the right to access land that was historically under their stewardship to begin with.

---

**Sandra Patterson**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Sarah Benton**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Natives Americans have every right.

---

**Kymmm Gresset**

**Grangeville ID**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am a former resident of the Lake Andes community and a 6th generation South Dakotan. I would like to offer my support for the finalization of the proposal to exempt enrolled Yankton Sioux Tribal members and their families from the purchase of park entrance licenses at North Point Recreation Area, Fort Randall South Shore Recreation Area, Randall Creek Recreation Area and Fort Randall Spillway Lakeside Use Area. This exemption provides access to traditional use areas by the YST and provides increased outdoor recreation opportunities that were previously free in the area. I would like to thank the commission for unanimously supporting this proposal.

Although not part of this proposal, I would also urge the commission to consider a different fee structure for South Dakota residents for the annual park pass such as that in Idaho where it is \$10 a year for every registered vehicle. Further, consideration to residents of local communities for fee free access days (or fee free passes) would ensure that residents of local communities have reasonable access to public lands that is not an economic burden within their community. Access to these lands were previously fee free for everyone's enjoyment. I realize that fees help support maintenance and upkeep of these lands, but fees should not be an impediment in the community for simple enjoyment such as swimming, picnicking with your family and other outdoor recreation opportunities.

---

**Mark Soukup**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Charon Asetoyer**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the free use/access to the Missouri River for the Yankton Sioux Tribal members. The lands were part of the original Treaty and the Government should honor those agreements. Treaties are the highest law of the land and should be followed not violated. As just seen in the Supreme Court ruling "reaffirming" sovereignty, Justice Neil Gorsuch said, "we hold the government to its word". So should the government in this case as well.

---

**Sarah Benton**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Kari Simpson**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Raven Tiger**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Amy Arrow**

**Ravinia SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Jodi Zephier**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I am in Full Support of Yankton Sioux Tribal members to have access to parks without paying fees and feel it is within our original treaty rights to do.

---

**Loren Lyles**

**Lawrence KS**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support waiving the fee for Yankton Sioux Tribal members to have full access to the Missouri River for recreational use and fishing.

---

**Christopher French**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Deshayla Heth**

**Pickstown SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe, I strongly stand with allowing tribal members to freely enter the parks and beaches located on our reservation. The beaches are where we like to enjoy our children's birthday parties. A lot of our tribal members go fishing to provide meals for their families. Some are restricted of doing so because they can't afford to pay the fee each time they want to cast a line into the river. Please give us all an opportunity to enjoy the river, and to fish on our very own lhanktowan lands. Thank you.

---

**Clement Zephier**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

It is my position that we as Dakota (native) people should have free use of public parks in America. This position is based upon treaty law and historical land use.

---

**Simone Cournoyer**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Pamela Aungie**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

It would be nice to take grand kids down to fish and to just listen to the water and trees when the wind blows.  
#STAYINGCONNECTED

---

**Victoria Flying Hawk**

**Mission SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Solana Fischer**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

We have every right...

---

**Florence Hare**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Amelia Knife**

**Delmont SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Isabelle Knife**

**Delmont SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Vanessa Hopkins**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Natives really preparing to take all our lands back. Just trying to keep peace

---

**Wanbdi Fischer**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Lashawn Medicine Horn**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Cleo Rouse**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

Save our water and wildlife!

---

**Rachel Fischer**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Lisa Miller**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I believe the parks and areas along the river in question are within the reservation boundaries and any tribal member should be allowed free access. Also, it should not be required for anyone with a tribal ID to have a fishing license as it is an inherent right to provide food and sustenance in order to survive. I know similar areas along the Lower Brule and Crow Creek Sioux tribes, indigenous persons are not required to pay a fee to use river access areas and are not required to have a license to fish. I support indigenous peoples free access and use based on sovereign and inherent rights.

---

**Kenneth St. Pierre**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Tina Marks**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think it's a great idea. Thank you GFP for the consideration!

---

**Anna Perez Selwyn**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Yankton Sioux tribe land

---

**Pearl Smith**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Jimmy Sanchez**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Support.

---

**Theodore Kranig**

**Yankton SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Michele Costello**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I agree that we should get free access to the river.

---

**Marcy Joseph**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Daniel Archambeau**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Kim F Hawk**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

The land and Missouri River belong to our people, so it's our right to visit the river as needed. We will prosper!!!

---

**Narcisse Shields**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Considering the fact that the native people have been since the beginning. Why would we not have access to the lands we hunted, the river we drank, bathed and fished from for generations upon generations ago.

---

**Carly Neal**

**Kenneth MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Respect

---

**Synona Drapeaux**

**Rapid City SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

YST RIVER ACCESS

---

**Jamie Archambeau**

**Kenneth MN**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Respect

---

**William Turner**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Respect

---

**Heather Rouse**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

We as people of the Ihanktonwan are entitled to free use of OUR MNI SOSE!! We are the people of the Missouri River! Wasicus took everything the least they can do is give us this back! Water is life Mni Wiconi as a Ihanktonwan I'm in full support of getting free PASSES!!!

---

**Karl Archambeau**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Rights

---

**Roseanne Cooke**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Rights

---

**Deaja Tilley**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** other

**Comment:**

Native people should swim for free for it is our land

---

**Gail Holiday**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Don't know if you can vote twice but if you can't don't remember if I did

---

**Shylah Medicine Horn**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As the Rivers and Lakes are a part of our Natural habitats, I believe it is only right to let us as Native Americans have free access to our waters. This is something that should never have been taken away from us in the first place. It is bad enough that our Ancestors grave sites were disrespected and there are now park buildings built over them.

---

**Cheyenne Quinn**

**Sisseton SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Tribal Members should be able to have free access to all state parks and state lands to fish-hunt-swim.

---

**Cora Janis**

**Pine Ridge SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Cleo Rouse**

**Mitchell SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I'm for free swimming and camping!

---

**Sharon Drapeau**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I believe that native Americans should have full free access to the river and it's park's to use for ceremonies, prayers, offerings, celebrations as well as hunting/fishing which are essential to our way of life.

---

**Andrew Fobb**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Kimberlee Selwyn**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Be nice to be an enrolled member and be able to access parks free of fees.

---

**Andrea Fischer**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

YST tribal members should have free access to the river. They've been here since the beginning.

---

**Dayla Picotte**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the request for free swimming access for the Yankton Sioux Tribe. It is a way of life and ceremony that we have been doing since the beginning of time. It isn't just a place to swim. It is a healing place, not only for our tribe but everyone. Water is life and we have always respected that connection and relationship.

Pidamiya  
Thank you

---

**Dawn King**

**Pickstown SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Wade Nelson**

**Brookings SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Laurel Long**

**Sioux Falls SC**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Pamela Redlightning**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the YST endeavor for free access swimming

---

**Savannah Valdez**

**Vermillion SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I support the Yankton Sioux Tribes endeavors for free access to the rivers and parks. It is their way of life and they rely on the land and rivers and take care of the land and rivers.

---

**Angele Blaine**

**Vermillion SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Please waive the fees for the Yankton Sioux Tribe.

---

**Kenneth Honomichl**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I don't believe the State of South Dakota owns the Taken areas on the Yankton Sioux Reservation. I would like the State recognize that this area is saturated with burials and some ancient mounds that were not demolished like the ones in the Picktown town site were. I hope that the State has the moral conviction to right a wrong. You local governments and business people will eventually put a monetary value on these areas and as always destroy the natural beauty of what remains. I would at least request the State to return the Whit Swan area and the Area between St Francis Bay and the Prairie Dog Bay Area. I would like a nature preserve established with on limited cultural activity and primitively camping allowed. Everyone can still access the current areas.

---

**Georgia Holiday**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Byron Standing Could Sr**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

We signed treaties for land and mineral rights and still don't have our treaty land rights to fish swim that's the least you could do if your not going to honor all our rights

---

**Holly Song Hawk**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Tregan Rouse**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I believe these are our inherent rights as American Indians to go to these public lands and parks because a lot of them are considered sacred sites and we conduct ceremonies there. The 1851 treaty of fort Laramie defines our boundaries and most of these lands are within the said boundaries. In my opinion everyone should be allowed to access these public lands for free and find a different way to pay for the expenses needed to maintain and operate the parks

---

**Eliza Weddell**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Tila Anderson**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I think it is a great idea to give the Tribal members free access to something that was once theirs to begin with. It shouldn't even be a question.

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**Hannah Arrow**

**Ravinia SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Arlette Rodriguez**

**Huron SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I'm an enrolled member and must have free access to these areas for my tribal members and our families. Your understanding is very much appreciated.

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**Monica Weddell**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Hayli Gray**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

---

**Ward Zephier**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Justin Songhawk**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Franki Espinoza**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I'm thankful that this issue is bringing some folks' true colors & ugly natures out into the light for everyone to see. We see you!

---

**Morissia Holiday**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

First off there was a treaty and in it was the agreement that tribal members would always have access to hunting ,fishing,ect. Second the land along parts of the river that is now fort Randal was tribal land but was taken when the damn was built. Without an agreement is my understanding.

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**Calvin Wright**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Terry Bruguier Sr.**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Giselle Weddell**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**David Tolliver**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** oppose

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Evaline Arrow**

**Fort Pierre SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Marquel Holiday**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Free access for Native Americans to use the parks and rec. areas for free will be good for natives, as we have always used these areas before there was fees.

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**Paul Gravatt**

**Lake SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I strongly support yankton Sioux tribal members having free access any and all parks

---

**Mandi Knudsen**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Free access is just a BABY step in the right direction!

---

**Stephanie Cournoyer**

**Marty SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Monica Drapeau**

**South Sioux City NE**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Shannon O'Connor**

**Sioux Falls SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

As a member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe I believe we should have a right to use it. We should have never been charged a fee because Of our treaty rights.

---

**Marie Picotte**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Brent Cooke Jr**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Allishia Abdo**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Larry Abdo Iii**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Alexander Zephier Iii**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Arabella Zephier**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Will Bennett**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I believe that there should be access to all state parks by tribal members without fees. In our area those were their traditional homes and areas, not to mention the treaties signed that granted use rights to the peoples as long as they flow. Furthermore I believe that the county you hold residency you should have free access to the state parks of that county. We provide support and aid to those areas while getting little in return. The parks should be free to the people and I am happy they are starting with the tribe and hope the program expands to all parks and all residents.

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**Wileen Rouse**

**Wagner SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

No comment text provided.

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**Janell Garcia**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

I fully support the proposal to waive park access fees for Ihanktonwan Tribal members. It's ludicrous to me that Tribal members gave to pay to access their own land and river, especially since these are already rights guaranteed through treaties!

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**Kandi World Turner**

**Lake Andes SD**

**Position:** support

**Comment:**

Supporting the ability of Yankton Sioux Tribe members and their families to access the areas of their own river and lands without paying the State to do so.