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**JANUARY
2008**

**South Dakota
Wildlife
Federation**

www.sdwf.org

OUT OF DOORS

Affiliated with the National Wildlife Federation

VOLUME 48, NUMBER 1

Grants Available for Habitat Projects

BARCODED FLATS

Beginning this spring, grants will be available from SDWF to cover direct costs in establishment of habitat and wetlands restoration. Both individual homeowners and organizations are eligible to apply. The funds are provided by the Evelyn & Bill Lohmann Conservation Fund, a permanently endowed donor advised fund established with the South Dakota Community Foundation. The purpose of the EBLCF is to support beautification and natural area conservation projects in South Dakota, with a special emphasis on native wildflower plantings, songbird habitat, and wetlands development and preservation.



shared her love, and by removing exotic species, planting native grasses, and adding a pond, he created in our suburban Chicago home one of the National Wildlife Federation's first Certified Backyard Habitats®. He died in 2002 of Lou Gehrig's Disease.

It is natural to honor their memory with projects to beautify and conserve wildlife habitat. I am pleased to join the South Dakota Wildlife Federation in administration of the Evelyn & Bill Lohmann Conservation Fund grant-making program, and to support SDWF's work on behalf of the wildlife of our state.

The E&BLCF was endowed by the family and friends of Evelyn and Bill Lohmann in their memory. Day Breitag of Pierre provided this statement:

In 1954, my mother caught polio, just two months before the Salk vaccine went into general public use. From the time she contracted the disease until her death twelve years later, she never again left her rocking bed or wheelchair. She breathed with a respirator. She couldn't sit up, turn, lift her arms or legs. She was twenty-five years old.

She had a great love of the wildflowers and songbirds of her native Midwest, and although her days of running through the fields and by the streams were done, she found joy and the strength to live a full life from the birds and flowers she could see through her window. From her rocking bed she taught her daughters the names of the species, the needs of habitat, the special beauty to be found in nature. Our father

To apply for a grant, please write or email your request for an application to; Chris Hesla, PO Box 7075, Pierre, SD 57501 or E-mail at sdwf@mncomm.com. Grants will be awarded in the range of \$250 to \$1,000. The application deadline is March 31, 2008. A committee of members of the SDWF Board of Directors will consider all applications; funds will be awarded as available. The endowment currently contains approximately \$26,000. Interest only will be used to make grants, and to support the operations of the SDWF.

Contributions may be made to add to the endowment by sending to: the South Dakota Community Foundation, P.O. Box 296, Pierre SD 57501, and specifying the Evelyn & Bill Lohmann Conservation Fund. Gifts are tax-deductible.

- Day Breitag of Pierre is currently a development officer with the National Wildlife Federation.

PHOTO BY SD TOURISM

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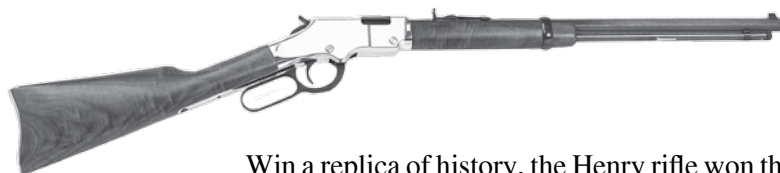
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SDWF Annual Commemorative Gun Giveaway



Win a replica of history, the Henry rifle won the west. The Golden Boy is a .22 rifle that features an American walnut stock, a gleaming brassline receiver, a brass buttplate, sporting sights and a 20-inch octagon barrel.

Void where prohibited by law. Your presence or contribution not necessary to win. SDWF reserves the right to offer a cash settlement in lieu of the shotgun.

SDWF, P.O. Box 7075, Pierre, SD 57501 • 605-224-7524

\$10
each

Your chance to
win a Golden Boy
Henry .22 rifle.



Executive Director's Update *by Chris Hesla*

Two of the most important components of the SDWF mission are the annual Conservation Camp for young adults and the lobbying efforts to protect our rights to hunt and fish in South Dakota. Yearly, our battle against the ever growing commercialization of our wildlife seems to never end. Lobbying is a very interesting job to say the least. There are times that you are the only one in the room to testify in favor for or against a certain bill. As in life, it is always easier to be on the popular side although being on the popular side does not guarantee victory in the political arena.

SDWF is a very strong political player in our state legislature and we have gained trust while creating a very good working relationship with a majority of the law makers. This has been accomplished in several ways. First and foremost is my friend and fellow lobbyist, David Nauman who has been SDWF's lobbyist for over 24 years. Dave and I have continually provided accurate data, given truthful testimony, listened to all sides and worked toward an amicable ending for everyone in the passed legislation. This year, Dave and I are monitoring 17 bills.

Here are two of the pieces of legislation we followed very closely this year:

SB 96 An act to provide for the issuance of landowner-sponsored (transferable) big game hunting licenses. This is a bill SDWF strongly disagrees with. In South Dakota, all wildlife is held in the "Public Trust" which means we all own the wildlife. No person or group or organization other than the State of SD should be allowed to maintain and sell licenses. Landowners have every right to sell the access to the public's wildlife on their land, but should not be allowed to sell licenses to hunt on their property. If a bill such as this passes, only those that can afford to pay big

money are the only ones allowed to hunt. (Died on Senate Floor 25 no votes to 10 yes votes)

HB 1263 An act to establish a hunter mentoring program, to authorize hunting under certain conditions by persons less than sixteen years of age, and to authorize the Game, Fish and Parks Commission to promulgate rules. This bill was introduced on behalf of the NRA. SDWF supported it as of now, but is being amended. It is hard to be against legislation for getting youth involved in hunting at a young age, but I believe it is harder to write a "one bill fits all" type of legislation to cure the drop in hunting numbers all across the United States. Every kid develops differently both physically and mentally. To say every 10 year old is capable of hunting is impossible, I am sure there are some 12 year olds that should not be hunting yet

As always, we could not effectively lobby or have the impact that SDWF has in the legislature without YOUR generous donations to our "lobbyist fund" or without the many members who take time out of their daily lives to write an email, make a phone call or show up at their local cracker barrel and question their local legislator as to their intentions and how they plan to vote on issues important to us. There is still time to receive my daily legislative e-mails. Just drop me an e-mail at sdwf@mncomm.com, with subscribe in the subject line and you will be added to the list.

All SDWF members will soon be getting a letter requesting a donation for our "lobbyist fund." SDWF cannot exist without our members and their very generous donations to our organization. WE CAN AND WE DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE! Thank You!

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President's Column *by Rieck Eske*

With the Legislative Session well underway. There are a few bills that are of concern. I realize by the time this get to print it is possible that most of the bills will be tabled or passed.

HB1140 an act to provide for the issuance without charge of certain Big Game licenses to resident active military personnel. First of all our active duty personnel are doing a great job, but its only for residents who are on active duty out of South Dakota. They can already receive without charge a fishing and small game licenses.

HB1171 an act to authorize the hunting of mountain lions as predator/varmints in certain areas of the state. I don't believe that mountain lions should ever be classified as varmints. They need to continue to be managed as Big Game.

HB1208 an act to reimburse certain motorists involved in vehicle collisions with wildlife and HB1215 an act to revise the criteria required for land to be classified as agriculture land. I believe this is just a way to break the Game, Fish and Parks. And what is "unintentional" collision with any wildlife in a vehicle.

SB96 an act to provide for the issuance of landowner sponsored big game hunting licenses. Landowners do have the right to control access to there land, they do not nor ever should have control over the right to sell public wildlife. It should stay with Game, Fish and Parks and use the lottery system that we use now.

Come out on February 11th, 7:30 AM for outdoor enthusiasts day in Pierre and let Legislators know how you feel.

Carry on the tradition!

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Gov. Schweitzer: Montana will not become another Wyoming

By Hal Herring, 1-22-08

Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer talked about oil and gas development that focused on the strength of Montana's economy—a strength not entirely based on oil and gas revenues, and one that might provide the bastion to keep the energy industry from, well, basically, treating us all like we were Wyoming.

One point well taken from his talk: Montana cannot count on the federal government to look out for the health of its lands.

Schweitzer said the federal government is in the grip of a "multiple personality disorder." It is leasing hundreds of thousands of acres of federal land to energy companies without considering the effects of development on the health of the land or wildlife, then contacting Western governors, saying there are problems, with, for example, the survival of the sage grouse.

If there was one message that the people in the audience could carry home from the Governor's address, it was that the concerns of the Montana Wildlife Federation—from stream access to Cabela's ranch sales to the loss of bull pine stands to a hotter and drier climate—are the Governor's concerns, too. As far as the coming boom in energy development, Montana is willing to do its part in providing the nation with oil and gas, and happy to reap the rewards. But, industry is not going to have the uncontested power, especially over state agencies like the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, that it has enjoyed elsewhere. What remains unclear is how the reins will be tightened, in light of what has happened on federal lands in Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico. How is Montana, where the energy industry is just beginning a new expansion, different?

The symposium, hosted in Great Falls by the Montana Wildlife Federation, was designed as an exploration of that question. As wildlife biologists, consultants, and policy makers told their stories of energy development in Colorado and Wyoming, a pattern emerged of citizens extremely worried about the current impacts to land, water, and wildlife, and what would be left behind when the boom was done (in 20 to 35 years) but unsure of how to demand change. It was a given that everyone in the audience was a consumer of the products being discussed, that all shared a responsibility for the development and that no one expected or wanted it to stop.

Walt Gasson, from the Wyoming Wildlife Federation, put it this way:

"We're not against energy development, and we couldn't be, anyway. We'd be hypocrites, we'd always be playing defense, and we'd always lose ... We're not talking about lying down in front of any bulldozers. If you did that, in Wyoming, you'd be two dimensional pretty fast."

And the message for Montana is clear, even if the path forward is not. Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Commissioner Steve Doherty told the audience, more than once, "It

is going to happen." There are 32 million acres of potential oil and gas leases on federal land in Montana, with 4.3 million leased so far.

It is the enormity of the development elsewhere and the demands by industry (with the concurrence of the federal



government) that the development should take precedent over any other concerns, that has galvanized members of the Montana Wildlife Federation and groups like them. Wyoming currently has 67,000 gas wells operating, with another 60,000 planned. Photo after photo was shown of the Wyoming gas fields, the drilling rigs and pads, the traf-

fic, the truck-killed antelope, the winter range under the dozer's blade, the sage grouse habitat and mating grounds, or leks, surrounded with dots that represented drilling operations. And it was freely admitted, over and over, that many of these photos were of one place—the Jonah Field and Pinedale Anticline developments in the Green River of Wyoming.

A member of the Montana Wildlife Federation, Darrel Olsen, spoke during a brief comment period.

"You are going to have to step away from that revenue argument. I don't give a hoot how much wildlife brings in to Montana or how that compares to oil and gas revenues. This is much deeper than that. This is about culture."

He concluded, "Industry is not going to look for new technologies [that would have less impact on the land] unless regulations force it."

Dave Galt's closing words were not dismissive of the concerns that had been presented during the day, though he insisted that more data was needed before any new restrictions on development were put into place.

"I heard a guy say that the Rocky Mountain Front was 'too special' to be developed for energy. Then I heard the same thing about the Beaverhead, and the North Fork of the Flathead. Maybe we need to sit down and decide what these places are."

Chris Marchion, Montana Wildlife Federation's President, recalled a life of growing up in Butte and Anaconda, with the Big Pit, and the pollution left behind by Anaconda's long boom as a smelting town.

"We never imagined that any of this did not have to happen, that it could have been done differently," he said. "But during the Montana Power coal boom, the citizens demanded that it be done differently, and it was. The last—number three and four coal plants—built at Colstrip are some of the best in the country. I don't know anybody who looks back now, and thinks that building those plants was a mistake. People got involved. That's what the guy from Louisiana was saying here, that what happened there was because nobody thought they could do anything to make it better. That's where we are, now."

We're not against energy development, and we couldn't be, anyway. We'd be hypocrites, we'd always be playing defense, and we'd always lose ... We're not talking about lying down in front of any bulldozers. If you did that, in Wyoming, you'd be two dimensional pretty fast.

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South Dakota sportsmen

136,000 hunters & anglers spending \$958,000 a day



TOTAL SPENDING \$350 million

Casting benefits throughout the economy.

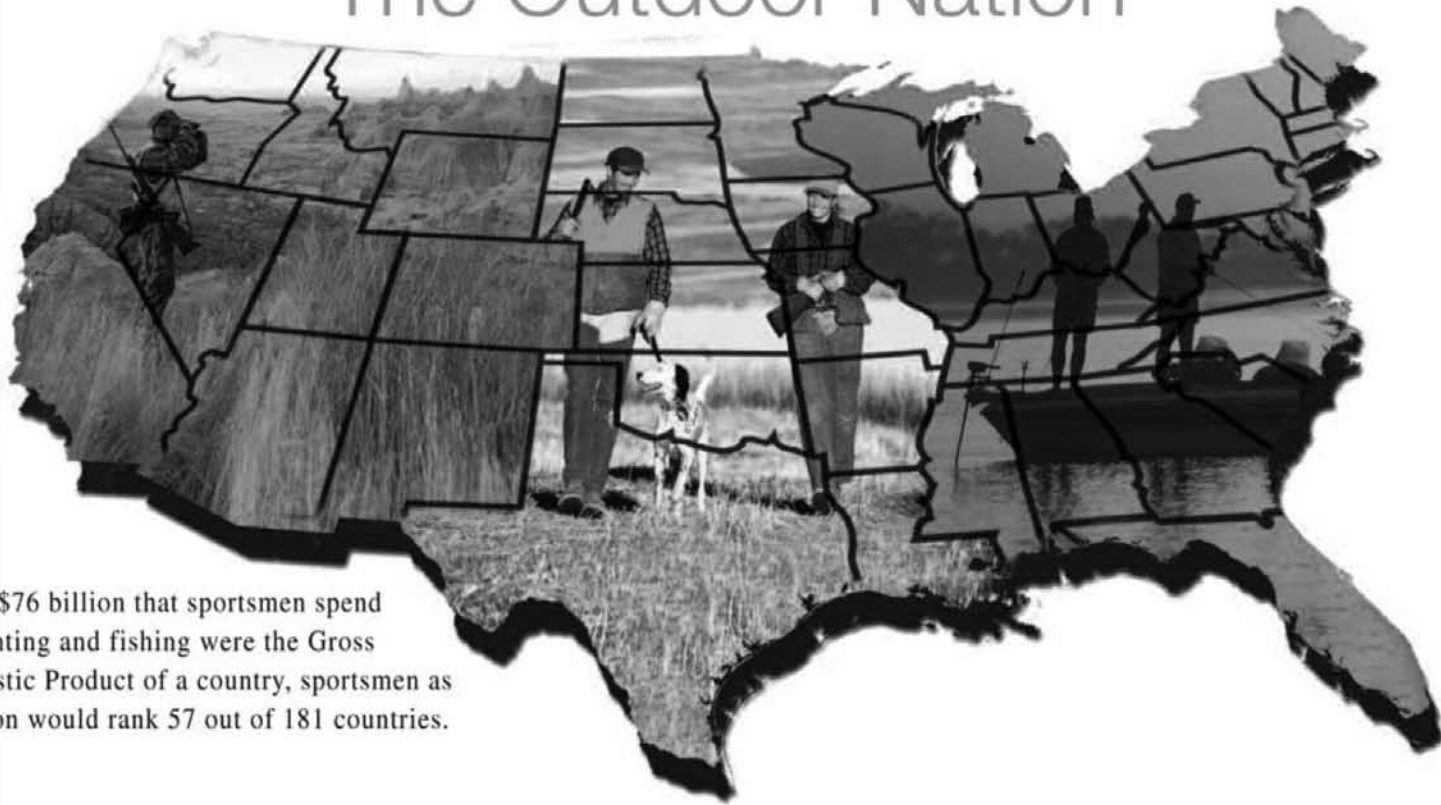
- Sportsmen support more jobs in South Dakota than Sioux Valley Hospitals and Health Care, one of the state's largest employers (6,000 jobs vs. 5,000).
- Annual spending by South Dakota sportsmen is three times the combined revenues of C&L Utility Construction, Showplace Wood Products, and Falcon Plastics - three of the fastest growing companies in the state (\$350 million vs. \$102 million).
- South Dakota sportsmen annually spend more than the cash receipts from dairy products, hay and turkeys - three of the top ten agricultural commodities in the state (\$350 million vs. \$347 million).
- South Dakota sportsmen outnumber the populations of Rapid City, Aberdeen, Watertown and Brookings (136,000 vs. 125,000).

Lots of bang. Even more bucks.

Jobs	6,000
Salaries and wages	\$138 million
Federal Taxes	\$35 million
State and Local Taxes	\$35 million
Ripple Effect	\$498 million



The Outdoor Nation



If the \$76 billion that sportsmen spend on hunting and fishing were the Gross Domestic Product of a country, sportsmen as a nation would rank 57 out of 181 countries.

PARTICIPATION	SPENDING	JOB	SALARIES/WAGES	FEDERAL STATE & LOCAL TAXES
Sportsmen 34 million	\$76 billion	1.6 million	\$60 billion	\$25.6 billion
Anglers 30 million	\$42 billion	1 million	\$38 billion	\$16.4 billion
Hunters 12.5 million	\$23 billion	600,000	\$21 billion	\$9.2 billion

Every single state makes a contribution through revenue, taxes, and jobs. Here are the facts on South Dakota's anglers and hunters.

PARTICIPATION		RANK
Resident sportsmen	136,000	# 45
Resident anglers	89,000	# 46
Resident hunters	89,000	# 37
Out of state hunters	81,000	# 7
Out of state anglers	45,000	# 46
Days afield	1.1 million	# 37
Days on the water	1.4 million	# 44

SPENDING		RANK
Sportsmen	\$350 million	# 43
Fishing	\$153 million	# 46
Hunting	\$196 million	# 37

JOB		RANK
Sportsmen	6,000	# 42
Fishing	1,800	# 47
Hunting	4,500	# 36



The majority of all sportsmen consider themselves "likely voters" and 8 in 10 say that a candidate's position on sportsmen's issues is important in determining for whom they will vote.

If all hunters and anglers living in South Dakota voted in the 2004 presidential election, they would have equaled 82% of the entire vote.

Nearly 1 out of 4 residents hunt or fish.

www.sportsmenslink.org

*A respondent who is both a hunter and an angler is counted in each category, but only once for total participation numbers.

**Money spent on an item for both hunting and fishing is only counted for in the total spending category.

***Sample size too small to be reliable.

Statistics come from the U.S.F.W.S. 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, Southwick and Associates, American Sportfishing Association, and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. For further information, contact CSF at 202-543-6850.



South Dakota Wildlife Federation Donors

At the recent Winter Board Meeting the SDWF Board created the SDWF Wildlife Legacy Council. The Council was created to allow recognition of the people who support SDWF above and beyond their membership and raffle donations.

Thank you to the following donors for their contributions to the SDWF. Please consider becoming a member of the Wildlife Legacy Council. SDWF is a 501(c)3 non-profit, all donations are tax deductible.

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SD Chapter of NWF, SD

These tax-deductible contributions will speak volumes for the future of the SDWF's Wildlife Legacy Council! Please consider your donation today. Names in ARIAL indicate that the Legacy Member has made their 2007 contribution to the SDWF Wildlife Legacy Council. Names in ITALICS indicate that the Legacy Member has made their 2008 contribution to the SDWF Wildlife Legacy Council.

Mt. Lion Kittens Sent to Zoos

PIERRE, S.D.—The mountain lion kittens collected by the Game, Fish and Parks Department as a result of South Dakota's mountain lion hunting season have now been placed in zoos.

The last of the kittens was placed in early January. They were all cared for at the Wildlife and Fisheries Science Department at South Dakota State University, Brookings. Before being placed in zoos they were studied there as part of SDSU's mountain lion research program.

The kittens were shipped to three zoos. Three went to Abilene, Texas, three went to Phoenix, Ariz., and one went to Denver, Colo.

"The staffs from SDSU and the Game, Fish and Parks Department work with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums for placement of the kittens in AZA-accredited zoos," said Wildlife Division Director Tony Leif. "All will be used for eventual public display and all appear to be doing well in their new surroundings."

Caring for the mountain lion kittens—which ranged in weight during their stay at SDSU from 10 pounds to 27 pounds—presents some unique challenges, according to Jonathan Jenks, distinguished professor and director of graduate programs in the Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences Department at SDSU.

"You have to be careful as they can be dangerous even as kittens," said Jenks, who needed four stitches after one of the kittens slashed him across the face with its claws. "You also have to be careful of their diet as they must receive very specific items to ensure their proper growth."

Old Black Hills Deer Camp Stories & Photos Wanted



I am doing research on Black Hills Deer Camps past to present. It sounds like this was a popular activity years back. If there are enough responses in the way of stories and photos, I would like to try and put these down on paper.

Thanks, Joe Hill
email: jdhill@rap.midco.net
(605)381-3139.

New Book Must Reading for SD Anglers

Written and reprinted with permission from Tony Dean

A new book published by the South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks is must reading for all who fish South Dakota Waters.

“History of Fisheries and Fishing in South Dakota,” was edited by Dave Willis, the department head of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at South Dakota State, and Charles Berry, Ken Higgins and S.R. Chipps, who are all scientists in the South Dakota Coop Unit. It’s available now and is packed with information on virtually every aspect of fishing in the state.

The book covers fish habitat, anglers, fish management in the Missouri River, Black Hills, glacial lakes and the warm water stock ponds. There are 27 different authors in this book, and that includes a chapter I wrote detailing the evolution of sport fishing in South Dakota.

The book also validates something we have often written and spoken about; the need to maintain wetlands and grass on the landscape, because these resources determine water quality.

It also indicates some things have been done correctly in South Dakota, though that is not the case elsewhere; the federally endangered Topeka Shiner is such an example.

This small fish is found in many tributaries of the James, Vermillion and Big Sioux Rivers while in other states within its range, the fish truly is endangered. A 1990 survey revealed the shiner is more abundant here than expected. The reason? Better water and grassland habitats in eastern South Dakota than in the other five states in the Topeka shiner’s range.

However, the authors caution us “with increasing land use changes driven by corn, soybean and oil seed processing plants, the quantity and quality of remaining grassland and wetland habitats could decline, and with them, the quality of stream habitat for all fishes.

There’s a chapter devoted to exotics, including the curlyleaf pondweed that was found first in Burbank Lake in 1965 but has since spread to a handful of lakes including Oahe, Sharp, and Lewis & Clark lakes, as well as to one stream, Rapid Creek.

Though the authors downplay curlyleaf pondweed in the

larger, wind-swept reservoirs, it has spread throughout the system, and some anglers say it precludes a normal shallow water walleye bite during the early summer in these reservoirs because it is difficult to fish with the heavy surface cover.



It poses particular problems in smaller protected waters such as the Hipple and La Framboise embayments near Pierre as well as in a housing development with canals in Fort Pierre. They also say at moderate population levels the pondweed might actually be beneficial as a refuge area for young fish in the Missouri River reservoirs where other aquatic vegetation is largely absent.

Its real danger lies in the possibility of transfer to glacial lakes such as Roy and Enemy Swim, where it could crowd out stands of native vegetation. Anglers can stop the spread of it as well as Eurasian Milfoil by cleaning all plant material from boats and trailers; draining the boat livewell and bilge area before leaving an infected lake and flushing the livewell and cooling system with hot water (140 degrees) between lakes.

I expect even avid, knowledgeable anglers will gain a great deal of information about how fish are monitored and managed in South Dakota waters.

The final chapter alone is worth the cost of the book, during which the editors and fish managers make predictions for the sport over the next 20 years.

One particular noteworthy trend is there will be 25 percent more anglers in the same amount of water in the future, and future fishermen will have to become more involved in protecting their sport than ever before. Stocking hatchery fish is likely to become more important, especially the highly sought walleye. The Missouri River reservoirs will hold more bass and rough fish. Cold water fisheries on the deeper Missouri River impoundments such as Oahe could be lost during droughts. And finally, big agriculture from field to factory may change the land and waters.

Limited numbers of the book will be available free from each of the GFP Regional Offices, and it’s available for sale (\$10) on the SD Game, Fish & Parks Web site at www.sdgfp.info.

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Special Buck Licenses Approved

FORT PIERRE, S.D.—While the last of South Dakota’s deer hunting seasons are winding down, work has already started on finalizing the 2008 seasons.

At its January meeting in Fort Pierre, the Game, Fish and Parks Commission approved the 2008 special buck licenses. Since the proposal was offered without changes from last year, it becomes effective without further commission action.

Special buck licenses are valid during the course of the East River and West River deer hunting seasons. George Vandel, assistant director of the Wildlife Division of the Game, Fish and Parks Department reminded commissioners that special buck license-holders may hunt only on private land.

Fees and license numbers will remain unchanged from 2007. There will be 500 resident and 500 nonresident licenses available for the West River season and 400 resident licenses available for the East River season. Nonresidents are not eligible for an East River special buck license. Resident license fees are \$155 while fees for nonresidents are \$505.

Applications for the special buck license should be available on the GFP Web site at <http://www.sdgfp.info/Wildlife/hunting/Applications/Index.htm> in mid-March. The first application deadline is April 25.

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Game, Fish & Parks Launches No Child Left Inside Program

In order to move forward, I think we need to move backward, back to allowing kids the opportunity for simple outdoor discovery

The loaner backpacks will be available in the Pierre area on May 1 through the Rawlins Public Library. Families and groups will be able to borrow backpacks – plus one large crate – of equipment helpful for exploring the outdoors. The packs include field guides, butterfly nets, magnifying glasses and other equipment.

PIERRE, S.D. – “Get out!” That’s the message coming from the S.D. Game, Fish and Parks Department’s new education program, entitled No Child Left Inside. As a response to the growing trend of children spending less and less time exploring their natural surroundings, GFP is implementing efforts to encourage parents and teachers to get children outdoors, learning.

“So many kids are spending hours each day in front of the TV or computer,” said Chad Tussing, education services coordinator for GFP. Recent surveys are showing that Americans watch, on average, four hours of TV per day. For children, that number climbs to an average of 6.5 hours per day.

The No Child Left Inside program consists of three components: a resource Web site, loaner backpacks and a small grant program. The Web site contains basic, easy-to-do activities for children throughout the year. “In order to move forward, I think we need to move backward, back to allowing kids the opportunity for simple outdoor discovery,” Tussing said.



The loaner backpacks will be available in the Pierre area on May 1 through the Rawlins Public Library. Families and groups will be able to borrow backpacks – plus one large crate – of equipment helpful for exploring the outdoors. The packs include field guides, butterfly nets, magnifying glasses and other equipment.

The small grant portion of No Child Left Inside is designed to extend the impact of the program to others who work with children. Groups, daycares, schools and individuals can apply for one of these grants, ranging from \$550 to 1,000 per grant. The projects must include a strong educational value and should have the potential for wide-reaching impact. Potential projects include educational curricula, outdoor classrooms or other educational activities. Applications are due March 28, 2008, and can be found online at the address given below.

For more information about Game, Fish & Parks’ No Child Left Inside efforts, please visit <http://www.sdgifp.info/Wildlife/Education/NoChild.htm> or contact Chad Tussing at (605) 773-2541.

Moose Hanging Around In County After Recent Release

It seems like we get one or more moose every year that wander down from the north, but this one was unusual from the standpoint that it hung around the area for so long. Our best guess is that it’s a young bull, about two and a half years old, and that it came from someplace in North Dakota or Minnesota.

GFP officials are hoping that the “homing” instinct will kick in now that the moose is closer to the north country. Carlton will attempt to keep tabs on the animal and monitor its whereabouts.

There’s a wayfaring stranger in Marshall County, and it looks like he may be planning to stay for a while. The South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks released a moose near White Lake last week Tuesday with the hopes that it would head back to where it came from - probably points north or east in North Dakota or Minnesota. But as of Monday afternoon, it had not taken the hint. Lisa Peterson, who resides about 12 miles northeast of Britton, reported Monday morning that the animal had taken up residence in her yard.

Marshall County Conservation Officer Corey Carlton went out to try to hurry the moose on its way.

“We got it out of their place and chased it out into the field to the north,” said Carlton. “We haven’t had any problems with the moose, but it just got a little close.” That was the reason that the animal was transported to Marshall County last week.

Regional wildlife manager Ron Schauer of Sioux Falls said that GFP officials have been keeping an eye on the animal for the past 18 months. It had been roaming around a three-county area - Miner, Lake, and McCook (north of Salem) - during that time but hadn’t been causing any problems until recently.

“It seems like we get one or more moose every year that wander down from the north, but this one was unusual from the standpoint that it hung around the area for so long. Our best guess is that it’s a young bull, about two and a half years old, and that it came from someplace in North Dakota or Minnesota.”

“We were actually content to have the moose in the region, but the last month or two it started going right into people’s yards, probably because of the weather and snow cover, and bothering cattle and eating trees and shrubs around houses. We started to get concerned about damage to property and just in the last month or so decided to try and get it as far north as we could.”

The GFP was faced with a similar scenario in December of 2005. In that case, a moose was in a Sioux Falls residential

area, and the animal was transported to Marshall County and also released in the White Lake area. That moose, however, did not fare well. It was later found dead in a grove of trees near the release site, likely a victim of the stress of capture and travel.

But this moose doesn’t seem to have shown any ill effects from his latest adventure. GFP officials shot it with a tranquilizer dart last week Tuesday, and within 30-40 minutes were on the road north. “This moose seemed to be a little more domesticated than the other moose we worked with, and it seemed to do real well,” said Schauer. “The first one we also kept in the zoo in quarantine for a while and had to put it down twice. Any time you do that it puts stress on the system.”

Marshall County has been the release point for both of the moose because it is close to the North Dakota line, and neither North Dakota or Minnesota will allow the animal to be transported across state lines. “Last time we contacted Minnesota and North Dakota they did not want us to release the moose there because of concerns about chronic wasting disease (CWD),” said Schauer.

CWD affects the brains of the animals and can spread to other animals. Deer have been the most common victims of CWD, but a case has been reported in a moose. “It is very doubtful that this moose has CWD, but the uncertainty is there,” noted Schauer. “All this has kind of come about since the discovery of the disease and we’re not able to move deer, elk, or moose across state lines.”

It is not really known why moose occasionally tend to wander south from their normal habitat, but Schauer said the animals can be victims of a brain worm. “Moose tend to get a brain worm, and we don’t know for sure, but there’s a chance this one could have a worm because he stayed so long. His normal senses to migrate might not be there.”

GFP officials are hoping that the “homing” instinct will kick in now that the moose is closer to the north country. Carlton will attempt to keep tabs on the animal and monitor its whereabouts.