21 GUN GIVEAWAY WINNERS ANNOUNCED

After the Spring Board Meeting held in Pierre, SDWF’s Executive Director drew the winning names of those who had purchased 21 Gun Giveaway tickets. There were 1076 tickets sold for this annual fundraising event. SDWF gave away 10-guns or cash settlements to the winners.

1. Kurt Weisbeck, SD  
2. Robin Oliver, SD  
3. EJ Neissl, AR  
4. Chris Smith, SD  
5. Fred Rankin, WI  
6. Jeff Mattern, SD  
7. David Hovden, SD  
8. Chad Elkroth, SD  
9. Merlyn Sommervold, SD  
10. John Paulson, MN

I want to thank everyone who purchased tickets for this raffle. Your generosity makes SDWF what it is today. THANK YOU!

53RD YOUTH CONSERVATION CAMP

By Mike McKernan / Camp Director

For the 53rd consecutive year, young campers from across South Dakota and a few from Minnesota traveled to the Black Hills to attend camp. This year’s camp was full with 116 campers in attendance. Campers, along with counselors and staff, gathered at Camp Bob Marshall to spend the week of June 5th – 11th learning about wildlife and conservation. The annual SDWF Youth Conservation Camp provided these young people an opportunity to make new friends, hear the message of conservation, and have a fun-filled, exciting time.

The weather (except for the heat) and outstanding programs provided both the campers and staff an exceptional camp week.

The week’s activities really brought out the enthusiasm of the young people. On Monday campers were divided into two groups. In the morning both groups were bussed to Rapid City. One group spent the morning getting an in-depth tour of the Fish Hatchery. The second group spent the morning at the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks Outdoor Campus West in Rapid City. What an amazing facility. The campers toured the facility and participated in activities including archery, BB gun shooting, canoeing, and kayaking. In the afternoon the two groups switched venues. On Tuesday morning the staff of Custer State Park provided programs for the campers. The young people had the opportunity to select from the following hikes: Prairie Trail, the Lover’s Leap Trail, Little Devil’s Tower, and because of our numbers, Sylvan Lakeshore Trail. In the afternoon, they got to choose among Bison Herd Management, Fire & Wildlife Ecology, Forestry in Custer State Park, and Vegetation Management in Custer State Park. On Wednesday and Thursday, campers selected sessions ranging from rifle, handgun, shotgun, and muzzle loading shooting, archery, lake survey, fly-tying & fishing, building a bow, reservoir fishing, waterfowl hunting, boating safety, can you canoe, wilderness survival class, upland bird hunting with pointing dogs, birding in the Black Hills, dutch and outdoor cooking, trapping in South Dakota, nature photography, trout fishing, meat treats, GPS and turkey hunting. Because campers selected which programs they wanted to attend, the response was overwhelmingly positive.

On Friday, campers traveled to Hot Springs. In the morning, campers traveled south of Hot Springs to the Whitney Preserve at Cascade Creek. Upon their arrival, the campers hiked the preserve. The Whitney Preserve is a unique Nature Conservancy site. After lunch campers visited the Mammoth Site where they first watched a short video on the site and then toured the facility. The evenings were also filled with interesting presentations. Monday evening, Dan Streifel, an avid wildlife photographer from Aberdeen, showed an awesome PowerPoint on birds that he has photographed in South Dakota. Dan has photos of over 300 species of South Dakota birds. Tuesday evening, Maggie Engler and her assistants of Black Hills Raptors brought several birds of prey including a ferruginous hawk, and several smaller owls and described each bird in detail. Wednesday evening, all campers visited the Mammoth Site where they first watched a short video on the site and then toured the facility.

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**Governor: Hold Off On Mowing East River Ditches**

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Dennis Daugaard is reminding East River landowners to hold off until July 10 to mow ditches along the state highway system.

“Roadside ditches provide valuable nesting cover for pheasants, especially in portions of the state with limited CRP land or other upland nesting habitat. Mowing too early can kill hens and newly hatched broods, and result in lower pheasant populations,” stated Gov. Daugaard. “In a state where pheasant hunting is an honored tradition, abiding by these regulations is important.”

Under state law and administrative rule, all counties east of the Missouri River must wait until July 10 to begin mowing right-of-way highway ditches. As of June 15, mowing is permitted in all West River counties. Mowing prior to the established dates is a class 2 misdemeanor.

Though the rules are only applicable to state highways, the Governor asks landowners to consider postponing mowing on all roadside ditches until July 10.

“Even the delay of a week or two can result in more successful nest attempts,” Gov. Daugaard said. (Governor Audio Clip 2)

The South Dakota Department of Transportation can mow specific areas when noxious weeds exist or public safety concerns arise. Any person wanting to mow Interstate right-of-way ditches at the allowable times must apply for a permit. Preference is given to abutting landowners. Other persons wishing to mow must also obtain a waiver from the abutting landowner. The permit application and waiver are available here.

Thank you Gov. Daugaard and thank you landowners and producers who follow the law and Rules regarding the Public ROW.

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**Executive Director’s Update by Chris Hesla**

South Dakota has been fortunate this year in receiving enough moisture for good habitat. Although there is a big shortage of moisture on West River to east, right now Pierre is just on the edge of it and we need more rain right now. But it is so green and there are so many pheasants running in the road ditches, I am looking forward to the end of August to see the results of the GFP’s Annual Pheasant Brood Survey. If the periodic rains keep coming the Pheasant numbers should be very good.

This month’s Out of Doors features the annual winners of the National Wildlife Week Poster Contest. It never ceases to amaze me year after year the unique posters SDWF gets from the affiliates. This year there were 26 entries in the contest which makes it difficult to pick the winners. I want to thank the affiliates and the schools that choose to participate in our contest.

As I am writing this column over 115 young adults and many volunteers spent last week out at Camp Bob Marshall enjoying the camps 53rd year. I cannot say thank you enough to the many volunteers that give their time spent last week out at Camp Bob Marshall enjoying the camps 53rd year.

SDWF will be sending out the 2016 Pheasant Hunt and Buffalo Shoot raffle tickets very soon. A copy and opportunity are in this newsletter. PLEASE support SDWF and purchase tickets when you receive the offer in the mail.

The 21-gun winners who listed on the front page of this issue, thank you to all who won and those that bought a chance to win a new gun. We gave away 10 guns this year.

In November of this year, I hope you all take the time out of your busy schedules to vote. Between now and November, PLEASE take time to educate yourself and know where your candidates stand on issues that affect our outdoor pursuits not only at the local level but also on a National level and exercise your right to vote.

Recently SDWF has decided to and supports an appeal to judically review a Day County Judge’s order prohibiting our members and the general public from accessing certain waters held in public trust. SDWF is preparing to file a brief with the South Dakota Supreme Court expressing our members’ concerns and arguments, primarily that water held in public trust should be accessible by the general public for recreational purposes.

More to come……

We can and do make a difference!!

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**Out of Doors 2 May 2016**

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President’s Column by Bill Antonides

Bill Antonides, President, SDWF Camo Coalition

SDWF President Rich Widman left to attend the annual National Wildlife Federation annual convention, leaving me in charge of writing his sort-of-monthly column. He has specifically asked me multiple times to write about the difference between the South Dakota Wildlife Federation (SDWF) and the SDWF Camo Coalition. I admit to holding off, in great part because it is not easy to explain. We have covered this before, but like trigonometry, sometimes a refresher course is needed.

Our members know the SDWF has been around a long time. In fact, the organization was founded in 1945 as a group of concerned outdoor enthusiasts who wanted to protect South Dakota’s wildlife and natural resources. The Federation soon became, and remains today, the leading voice in fishing, hunting and outdoor recreation throughout South Dakota. SDWF has over 3,500 members, both residents and out-of-state visitors. There are 16 affiliate clubs located throughout South Dakota. The Federation has done its job well, focusing on conservation, resource management, education, and protecting our hunting and fishing rights and our outdoor heritage.

Some of this work is done at the SDWF Youth Conservation Camp. Some is done at meetings across the state, whether they be with affiliate clubs, state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, community leaders, ag interests, or a combination of all of the above. Some of the work is done at GF&P Commission meetings, at our legislative sessions in Pierre, and even in the halls of Congress in Washington. The point is the Federation is the largest organization in the state fighting for conservation and sportmen’s rights, with new battlefronts emerging each day and in different areas. In 2010, after some 65 years of running an outstanding and successful organization, the SDWF started a sister organization called the SDWF Camo Coalition. The question has been asked why we fixed something that wasn’t broken. The truth of the matter is SDWF wasn’t broken, but was getting there. To quote everyone’s grandmothers, “A stitch in time saves nine.”

SDWF is a nonprofit organization. As a nonprofit, the Federation can receive tax deductible contributions, but has to follow certain IRS rules. Before I get any further, if you have ever filled out more than a 1040EZ income tax return, you understand everything I say here should be prefaced by the words, “In general,” or “As near as our advisors can tell.” So, keeping in mind this is a summary of several hundred pages of unintelligible tax code, SDWF was becoming concerned about the cost of its lobbying efforts. As a nonprofit, SDWF can only spend a certain percentage of its income on direct legislative lobbying, and is limited or prohibited from performing certain political functions a non-tax exempt organization can do. SDWF can’t call out a specific legislator on his or her voting record, for example, or form a PAC, or perform many of the activities that may be necessary to do business in the world we are living in today.

However, our primary concern was the percentage of income spent on lobbying, our most important function in protecting our natural resources and the public’s right to access and reasonable use of those natural resources. SDWF has two fulltime lobbyists during the legislative session, and has expenses throughout the year related to lobbying. As more and more anti-sportsmen legislation was introduced, the total expense of fighting this legislation was nearing the threshold of what IRS rules allow.

Rather than wring our hands and worry about how much we were spending, or worse yet, back down from the fight to protect everything we care about, the SDWF Camo Coalition was formed. Please understand the additional costs of running both organizations are minimal, as we use shared resources where allowed by IRS rules, and rely on volunteers to keep the organizations functioning. We are still a lean fighting machine, watching our pennies.

SDWF Camo Coalition isn’t a nonprofit organization per IRS rules, meaning in part your contributions are not tax deductible as they are for the SDWF. While this sometimes makes it harder to raise money for lobbying, Camo is necessary to keep SDWF functioning as a nonprofit, while allowing our lobbying and legislative activities to continue. Also, to be clear, Camo is not a nonprofit organization for IRS purposes, but this does not mean the organization makes a profit. We wish we didn’t need to spend time and effort to squelch away for when major problems come our way, but so far it hasn’t happened. We have far too much red ink on the ledger sheets, particularly considering the importance of our work.

The stated purpose of the Camo Coalition is to organize sportsmen and women across South Dakota to act quickly and effectively on issues affecting wildlife management and outdoor recreation interests in the SD Legislation or with the GF&P Commission. The two paid lobbyists we have at the legislature and the daily email updates our Camo members receive during the legislative session are examples of how we do this.

What sometimes becomes confusing is the SDWF has the same purpose, but also has so many other activities it is involved in. In effect, Camo now takes over the fundraising for and spends the lion’s share of the money on political activities SDWF is limited in doing, and SDWF spends the lion’s share of its money on education, allowable legislative actions, and legal issues. Yes, SDWF still pays for some of the lobbying, which far too often also means they have great political power.

Meanwhile, the cost of doing business keeps going up as the threats to our natural resources and our outdoor freedom increase. It’s hard to say where more money will be needed in the coming year. Right now, we are potentially becoming financially involved in two, if not three lawsuits over water and access, including unlawful road closures and use of public water. SDWF will pay the bills for these court cases as they are legal issues, but if the cases result in legislation, Camo will step in to pay for lobbying expenses. Yes, there may be overlap. Yes, it may be expensive for both organizations. And yes, we will always need more money to work on these issues.

Membership to the Camo Coalition is free, in great part because we need the voices of everyone who cares about our outdoor heritage, rich or poor, to be informed and to speak up when needed. Camo relies on donations to keep going. SDWF membership is not free, but also relies on donations to meet its many and varied obligations. The folks who want to take away your rights have very deep pockets, which far too often also mean they have great political power.

I hope this synopsis clears up some of the confusion over the SDWF and SDWF Camo Coalition. If you are still confused, don’t feel like the Lone Ranger. Just know this: The organizations are legally separate, but work together to protect our natural resources and our outdoor heritage, not just for us, but for future generations. Both organizations deserve the support of every single person in this state who goes afield with a rod, a gun, or just a camera. Yes, our kids and grandchildren will probably be fighting the same fights, but we have a duty to make sure there is something left to fight for. Without the SDWF and SDWF Camo Coalition working hand-in-hand, the future would be grim indeed.

Bill Antonides
President, SDWF Camo Coalition

Just One
Since 1947.
Breeding Duck Numbers, Pond Count Down in North Dakota Spring Survey

Spring breeding duck numbers in North Dakota are down from last year, according to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

Results of the state’s annual spring breeding survey conducted in May showed an index of 3.46 million ducks, a decline of 5.3 percent from 2015. With the exception of a 4 percent increase in gadwalls and 19 percent more ruddy ducks, all species showed declines. Blue-winged teal were down 2 percent, while mallards declined 9 percent, pintails 17 percent and canvasbacks 18 percent. However, overall duck numbers are still 45 percent above the long-term average of the survey, which began in 1948.

The water index is of greater concern. The wetland index was average of the survey, which began in 1948.

“The conditions coming out of May into June were much better than what we observed during the week of the survey (May 9 to 15),” he said. “Frequent rains have since filled many wetlands that are beneficial for breeding ducks.”

North Dakota is a key duck production state, particularly for nesting blue-winged teal, mallards, gadwalls, pintails, shovelers, bluebills and redheads.

Dr. Frank Rohwer, president and chief scientist of Delta Waterfowl, said the North Dakota survey showing high duck numbers and poor wetland conditions is an unusual result.

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States Regulate Drone Use in Hunting

Drones are gaining in popularity. They are seeing increased use in commercial applications like real estate. And, even some use in law enforcement. But there is one thing many wildlife officials say drones shouldn’t be used for… hunting. Wyoming just passed a restriction on drone use in hunting. Other states are considering proactive measures to maintain ethical hunting practices.

Andy Alban with South Dakota Game Fish and Parks says the state is aware of an increase in drone use. He says state law already prohibits both killing and tracking animals using aircraft, including drones. He says the GF&P reviewed this law a year ago. He adds that the state could expand drone regulations in the future.

“Any time that you have advancements in equipment or technology, a lot of times it’s important that the regulations that go along with that are out there and sometimes in front of the increase in popularity so you’re not trailing technology,” says Alban.

Alban says western states like Wyoming and Colorado have passed specific restrictions on drones because they had no previous regulations on aircraft hunting. He adds that the Federal Aviation Administration also regulates drones.

Mark Holyoak with Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation says that everyone should refer to the agencies in their respective states for drone regulations. Holyoak stresses that drones used for hunting purposes interfere with the ethical “fair chase” of hunting.

“When it comes to hunting, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation stands by and believes that ethical hunting is the way to go. We all have a pretty good idea of what that means, hunting within regulations that are outlined in different states, doing it in an ethical manner, having the utmost respect for game and other wildlife that’s out there,” says Holyoak.

Holyoak says drones have some positive use, but they should not be used to harass or hunt animals.
SD Wildlife Federation Donors

At the 2003 Winter Board Meeting, the SDWF Board created the SDWF Wildlife Legacy Council. The Council was created to show 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(c3) non-profit, all donations are tax deductible. These tax-deductible contributions will speak volumes for the future of the SDWF’s Wildlife Legacy Council. Please consider your donation today. Donations can be sent to SDWF, PO Box 7075, Pierre, SD 57501.

The Legacy Council consists of five different donation levels. These donation levels were revised October 2011 to: Level V Eagle ($2,000.00 & above), Level IV Buffalo ($1,000.00 - $2,000.00), Level III Elk ($500.00 - $1,000.00), Level II Deer ($250.00 - $500.00), and Level I Pheasant ($100.00 - $250.00).

May 2016
LEVEL III PHEASANT
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
SELDEN, STEVE - SD

LEVEL II DEER
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
BISGARD, CURT - SD

LEVEL I PHEASANT
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
MARTENS, LEIGH - SD

December 2015
LEVEL I PHEASANT
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
GIBSON, LEE - SD

LEVEL II DEER
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
FREEMAN, JERRY - SD

LEVEL V EAGLE
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
MANZER, ROBERT - SD

October 2015
LEVEL I PHEASANT
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
BROWN, ALLEN B. - SD

LEVEL II DEER
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
CARR, KEVIN - SD

LEVEL V EAGLE
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
MANZER, ROBERT - SD

September 2015
No legacy donations for this month.

August 2015
LEVEL II PHEASANT
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
JOHNSON, PERRY - SD

LEVEL V EAGLE
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
RUST, RON - SD

LEVEL II DEER
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
ANDREW, ROBERT - SD

July 2015
LEVEL I PHEASANT
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
JOHNSON, JASON - SD

LEVEL II DEER
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
FOSTER, KENNY - SD

LEVEL III ELK
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
GIBSON, LEE - SD

June 2015
LEVEL IV BUFFALO
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
MARTENS, LEIGH - SD

LEVEL V EAGLE
SDWF SPORTSMAN CLUB - SD
MARTENS, LEIGH - SD

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Out of Doors 6 May 2016

"JUST ONE"

The SDWF has approximately 3,000 members. We are constantly fighting to keep our outdoor heritage and to conserve our natural resources. We can’t continue without our members and we can’t keep fighting unless we grow our membership.

Encourage your friends that enjoy the outdoors to join the SDWF directly or through a local affiliate club. “JUST ONE” new member can make a world of difference!

Love the outdoors and need a tax deduction this year? If you have a car, van, truck, ATV, or boat that’s in reasonably good shape and you aren’t using, donate it to the SDWF. You’ll get a nice tax break and will feel great knowing you helped our great organization protect South Dakota’s outdoors.

Gone but not forgotten hunting friends;
In honor of:  Rich Widman
Dec. 2015

Gone but not forgotten our special companions;
In honor of:  Owner:  Rich Widman
Dec. 2015

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Out of Doors 6 May 2016
**ZEBRA MUSSELS DISCOVERED IN MCCOOK LAKE**

Pierre, S.D. - Boaters enjoying South Dakota’s McCook Lake should be aware that the waterbody is now classified as infested for zebra mussels by the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP). Special precautions are necessary to prevent spreading mussels to other waters.

Mussels were initially discovered by members of the McCook Lake Association performing maintenance prior to Memorial Day Weekend. Additional sampling efforts by GFP have confirmed adult zebra mussels exist in multiple areas throughout the lake.

In August 2015, zebra mussels were present and reproducing in large numbers in Lewis and Clark Lake near Yankton. This prompted a collaborative effort by multiple local, state and federal agencies from South Dakota and Nebraska to address the problems these mussels can create. Boat inspections and enforcement efforts increased to ensure boaters were complying with regulations.

“At a recent checkpoint on Lewis and Clark Lake, a number of individuals entered the ramp area towing their boats with their plugs still in place and they received citations. Anglers and all recreational boaters need to understand that once they remove their plugs they must remain out until just prior to launching on a subsequent trip on the water,” said Emmett Keyser, GFP southeast regional supervisor. “The boating public is one of our essential allies in helping to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species and we want to remind them they must leave their plugs out and drains open at all times when they are not on the water.”

**Antler Hunters Receive Stiff Penalties**

**Wyoming Game & Fish Department sent this bulletin at 05/24/2016 03:44**

PINEDALE- Over the last 20 years, shed antler hunting has become very popular, and very lucrative. The increased demand and competition for antlers has created an equally dramatic increase in people combing big game winter ranges causing constant disturbances of wintering wildlife, all at a time when animals can least afford it.

As a result, in 2009 the Wyoming State Legislature enacted a law giving the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission the authority to regulate the collection of shed antlers. In 2010, the Commission signed a new regulation prohibiting the collection of shed antlers on public lands west of the Continental Divide in Wyoming from January 1 through April 30.

However, due to the increased value and competition for antlers, some have chosen to ignore the seasonal closure. Consequently, game wardens in the Green River, Pinedale and Jackson regions have been focusing their efforts to catch these “antler poachers.” Likewise, the public has made it very clear that they expect strict enforcement of the regulation and stiff penalties for those apprehended.

In addition to the increased enforcement, game wardens have worked closely with prosecuting attorneys to recommend stiffer penalties for anyone caught intentionally violating the shed antler season. “It became clear that a $220 fine wasn’t going to deter some illegal antler hunters from intentionally violating the law,” said South Pinedale Game Warden Jordan Kraft. “Increased penalties were needed to make the consequences comparable to the market value of the antlers.” As a result, wardens began requesting enhanced fines and loss of hunting privileges for blatant violators and the prosecuting attorneys and judges agreed.

This winter, 16 citations and two warnings have been issued to individuals who violated shed antler regulations, with four additional cases pending. Penalties have varied from six months to two years loss of hunting privileges and up to 2 years loss of antler hunting privileges. Penalties totaled nearly $4,150 in fines, over 105 hours of community service and 70 days in jail (suspended) thanks to the dedication of Sublette and Teton circuit court judges and county attorneys.

“Right now, South Dakota waters are beginning to reach peak water temperatures for juvenile veligers to spread. Anglers and boaters need to be extra diligent and completely drain their boats before leaving boat ramp areas,” concluded John Lott, GFP chief of aquatic resources.

For more information on zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species, visit sdleastwanted.com. About zebra mussels: Zebra mussels are a small, invasive mollusk ( clam) that originated in Eastern Europe and first arrived in the U.S. in the mid-1980s. Although usually less than an inch in size as adults, they can rapidly spread under the right conditions. These mussels can clog irrigation lines and damage boat motors and docks, and their sharp shells can wash up on shorelines in large numbers making recreation difficult. The larval stage of zebra mussels, called veligers, are nearly impossible to detect due to their small size, heightening the importance of the state’s boat draining laws. Veligers can be easily transported to new waters in a small amount of water remaining anywhere in a boat or watercraft after a fishing or boating trip.
South Dakota pheasant harvest shifting west, state data shows

Hunters are harvesting more pheasants further west and spending more money since 2013 when pheasant numbers in the state plummeted, according to state data.

The state Game, Fish and Parks Department released its annual report on the economic impact pheasant hunting has on the state Wednesday. The data, show hunters spent more than $170 million dollars in South Dakota in 2015 up from $140.3 million in 2013. Most of the spending came from nonresidents. Nearly 85,000 nonresident hunters spent $140.3 million. The state’s 65,000 or so resident hunters spent about $29.8 million.

Included in the spending statistics was a county by county breakdown of the state’s estimated pheasant harvest. A look at GF&P’s historical data shows a westward shift in where hunters are harvesting the most pheasants. The top six pheasant harvesting counties provide a good example.

Last year, Tripp and Brule counties came in with the highest hunter spending levels at $10.9 million and $9.7 million respectively. Tripp County also saw the highest pheasant harvest of any county in the state with 56,949. Brule County, which saw a pheasant harvest of 44,810, came in at number three for harvest behind Lyman County which saw 45,011 pheasants killed.

Those numbers represent a far cry from seven years ago, GF&P data show. In 2008, Brown, Beadle and Spink Counties, which hold the James River valley and have long been known as South Dakota’s pheasant belt, far outstripped every other county in terms of pheasants harvested. Brown County saw 114,237 pheasants harvested, Beadle County saw 113,623 and Spink County saw 103,614 pheasants killed. Lyman County on the west side of the Missouri River came in at a distant third place with 96,569.

In 2009 things started to change. Harvest numbers dropped by about half and Brule County saw the third highest number of birds harvested behind Brown County with 57,819 birds killed and Spink County with 57,659. Tripp County had the fourth highest pheasant harvest in the state that year with 56,911 birds killed.

Beadle County, in 2009, had the second highest amount of hunter spending with $11.9 million but had dropped to sixth place in harvest with 50,342 birds killed. Brown County stayed on top of the list for both harvest and money spent by hunters at $13.7 million. Spink County was fourth place in terms of how much money hunters spent with $11.3. Brule County was third with $11.6 million.

By 2011, Tripp County had replaced Brown County as the county with the highest pheasant harvest. Brown County, however, still had the highest amount of hunter spending. The same thing happened in 2012. Then in 2013 Tripp County saw the most pheasants killed and the most hunter dollars spent.

In the 2013, 2014 and 2015 seasons, Tripp, Brule and Lyman Counties were the top three counties in the state for the number of birds harvested. County-specific spending estimates are generated by applying per-hunter spending estimates to the number and distribution of pheasant hunters from 2015 GF&P upland game harvest surveys.

Sportsmen/women- Want to help fund SDWF and the Youth Conservation Camp plus reduce your taxes this year? Donate stock and land to the SDWF You not only won’t have to pay taxes on those assets, you will pay less tax because of your generosity!