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OUT OF DOORS

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Inside this issue:

Page 2

PRESIDENT COLUMN HABITAT & ACCESS

Page 3

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COLUMN

SAVE THE DATE SDWF CONVENTION

Page 4-5

DANGEROUS ANIMALS ENCROACHING
ON SD NEIGHBORHOODS

Page 6-7

CRP DWINDLING CONGRESS SEEKS
REFORMS

Page 8

29-90 SPORTSMAN CLUB DONATION
FISH POPULATION - SEVERE WINTERKILL

Page 9

SUPREME COURT WETLANDS DECISION

Page 10

59TH YOUTH CONSERVATION CAMP

Page 11

NATIONAL WILDLIFE
FEDERATION FARM BILL FLY-IN

Page 12

SDWF RAFFLE 2023

BARCODED FLATS

PUBLIC LANDS RULE WOULD BENEFIT WILDLIFE AND SPORTING TRADITIONS

Noem taking wrong position on Bureau of Land Management - By Brad Johnson

As a sportsman who enjoys getting out on public lands and waters, I was heartened when the U.S. Bureau of Land Management recently released a proposed Public Lands Rule that elevates conservation as one of the multiple uses on federal land.

Not surprising, however, was South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem's decision to fly off to Washington, D.C., to testify Thursday against the proposal, followed quickly by an East Coast fundraiser.

Our state is a small player in this issue, which has greater importance in other western states. BLM manages 274,000 surface acres in South Dakota, about a half percent of the state's 49.5 million acres.

Noem's testimony before the Committee on Natural Resources will be in support of a House resolution requiring BLM to abandon the "Conservation and Landscape Health" rule.

In a press release, Noem said the "proposed rule will result in poorly managed federal lands, which will devastate conservation and management efforts, harm our wildlife, slow economic growth and endanger public safety."

Nothing could be further from the truth.

What the proposed rule actually does is manage the land in a balanced way, so we all benefit. BLM's mission has been to "sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations."

Unfortunately, for far too long, the BLM's emphasis has been on "productivity" instead of "health."

Over the past few years, cheatgrass increasingly has choked out native species, development has fragmented wildlife migration corridors, and our lands and communities are put at risk by wildfires.

All of this threatens the health of our state's fish and wildlife populations — as well as our economic health. Last year, hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife-viewing contributed \$1.3 billion to South Dakota's economy. If our wildlife populations dwindle, that has a direct negative impact on our economic fortunes.

The newly-proposed BLM rule makes conservation an equal use on public lands — on par with energy development, grazing, timber harvests or recreation. Its aim is to improve and maintain the health of the lands and ecosystems so they can adapt and thrive.

It is what Congress envisioned when it passed the Federal Lands Planning and Management Act that directed the agency to develop lands in a thoughtful, responsible way to ensure



Bear Butte, as seen in 2020 from a vantage point within the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's Fort Meade Recreation Area near Sturgis.
(Seth Tupper/South Dakota Searchlight)

that future generations could continue to work and recreate on these lands indefinitely.

The new rule directs the agency to identify and prioritize landscapes in need of restoration by working with tribal partners, state and local agencies, conservation groups and other stakeholders. It requires management practices to ensure that the restoration work is improving the health of public lands and waters.

The bureau's Public Lands

Rule is a common-sense, long-overdue proposal that all of us who love public lands should embrace.

The rule is not intended to stop development on public lands. It simply more broadly applies to the land health standards and objectives the grazing community has had to follow.

The rule proposes an innovative plan to offer conservation leases that leverages private investment in restoring public lands. This allows the BLM to partner with Indigenous leaders, conservation groups, energy developers and others to improve the health of wildlife habitat.

Conservation leasing could also be used as an important tool for compensatory mitigation. For example, if an energy company wanted to compensate for development in one area, it could buy conservation leases in a separate area in need of restoration.

The bureau's Public Lands Rule is a common-sense, long-overdue proposal that all of us who love public lands should embrace. This doesn't alter the BLM's "multiple use" mission and won't stop energy development, mining, grazing or timber harvests.

It encourages more responsible development so the land can thrive well into the future. It also provides more opportunity for tribal and local communities to have more input into the way their public lands are managed.

The benefits of such a policy are numerous, and unfortunately Gov. Noem is making it a partisan, political soundbite.

Not only will wildlife habitat be restored, but it will also reduce wildfire risks, help control the spread of invasive species, improve livestock forage and enhance opportunities for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation.

South Dakotans love our wildlife and sporting heritage. We believe in restoring and safeguarding the lands and waters that are critical for future generations to enjoy hunting, fishing, camping and hiking.

President's Column by Zachery T. Hunke



President,
Zachery T. Hunke

HABITAT AND ACCESS

Habitat and access are the largest contributing factors to opportunity cost when it comes to outdoor recreation. Utilization of the resources we have in the most beneficial way possible has always been at the forefront of the conversation.

When it comes to habitat. South Dakota made a partnership agreement with the USDA to expand their current Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program “CREP” this past year. The Big Sioux Watershed CREP is focused on enrolling an additional 25,000 acres of agricultural land. These additional CREP acres will not only strengthen local producers but will serve the public well. The primary focus of the program is cleaning up one of the most polluted waterways in America. Everyone should care about having clean water. However, these acres will serve as excellent habitat for our wildlife and additional access opportunities for our outdoor users. It takes a great deal of effort and resources to accomplish these types of programs. It is these types of accomplishments that we are champion. Long-term enrollment and enrichment of our natural resources enhance our quality of life, our sport, traditions, and beneficially impact our economy.

When it comes to opportunity. For many opportunities can mean many things. For me opportunity means having a reasonable chance to fulfill my goal. In some areas of our state, we are expanding opportunities while in other parts of the state our opportunities are

diminishing. There have been efforts to vacate roads, deter access and or block access to federal lands and in some cases water. SDWF and its affiliates have always been at the forefront in speaking up the loss of sportsman’s access. If you find yourself unable to access public property and or water, we need to hear from you. It takes money and a great deal of effort to protect that which needs protecting. Without voices and boots on the ground more accessible areas will be lost.

Future generations require opportunity and access for them to experience those “hook setting” life experiences. I was graced with those experiences growing up in South Dakota. SDWF will continue to be the most influential group representing the sportsman of our great state! As we must not ever forget, we are simply borrowing our land and water from future generations.

If protecting South Dakota’s outdoor recreational opportunities is a passion of yours, I urge you to get involved. The South Dakota Wildlife Federation wouldn’t exist if it weren’t for passionate individuals like you.

Protecting and representing our outdoor community is more important than ever. We appreciate your membership, donations, and support.

Zachery T. Hunke

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Executive Director Column by Megan Howell



Executive Director,
Megan Howell

I hope you all are having a fantastic summer and have been able to get out with family and friends to enjoy South Dakota’s great outdoors! Summer seems to be flying by, but I’ve been able to make time to fish with family and friends! The fishing has been great on Oahe and central South Dakota lakes!

South Dakota Wildlife Federation has made great strides in the past couple of months. We have purchased a Customer Relationship Management program called EveryAction. EveryAction is a tool we can use to gather all our members in to one place to make communication, advocacy, and fundraising more efficient. In order to get on board with EveryAction I have been going through over 60,000 member data points to get our membership data in the correct form to be utilized through EveryAction. After the data points

are uploaded, I will start learning the incredible power of this platform and expect to have it up and running in the next 3 months, so stay tuned! This has been a very time-consuming task, but in the end, it will bring SDWF a plethora of connectivity and opportunity to continue to work for South Dakota’s outdoors men and women!

The Annual Convention is coming up in Brookings August 4th-6th and we have been working hard to make it a great one. I am really looking forward to meeting everyone that is available to join us this year! We have a fun Friday night filled with a trap shoot and meal at the Brookings Gun Club, and an awards ceremony, banquet, prime rib dinner, and raffles Saturday evening at the Brookings Inn. It will be a great weekend and I hope to see you there!!

Megan Howell
Executive Director

SAVE THE DATE!



SDWF’s Annual Convention August 4th-6th in Brookings!

PLEASE RSVP and make reservations at the Brookings Inn by July 21

The 2023 Annual Convention is coming up fast we have a great weekend planned:

Friday: - Brookings Gun Club, 3 miles west of the Brookings Inn (634 58th Ave, Brookings, SD 57006)
5:30 PM (bring your shotgun)- brats/burgers/drinks provided

Saturday: Brookings Inn, 2500 6th Street, Brookings, SD 57006
8 am-noon: Business meeting and GFP SEC
Noon lunch provided
12:30-4:30 : guest speakers
5:30 Happy hour
6 Banquet
7 Awards
8 Auction

Sunday:
8am-1pm business meeting then Camo meeting

Please fill this attendance form out and get it in ASAP so we can make this a great convention!

_____ Yes, I will attend the 2023 Convention in Brookings August 4th-6th	_____people attending
_____ Yes, I plan on coming Friday night to the Brookings Gun Club	_____people attending
- Brookings Wildlife Federation is sponsoring food and beverages	
- Bring your shotgun for Trap/5 Man contests (Gun Club rates apply)	
_____ Yes, I plan on attending the Banquet (Prime Rib)/Awards/Auction on Aug 5th	_____X \$50 per person(includes \$20 raffle spot)
_____ Yes, I plan on attending and I am an affiliate delegate	_____X \$20
_____ No, I cannot make it but would like to donate	\$_____
_____ Please enter me in the 120-space raffle board for prizes	_____spaces X \$20
Make checks out to SDWF or send in credit card info	\$_____Total

South Dakota Wildlife Federation ♦ PO BOX 7075 ♦ Pierre, SD 57501

Please direct any questions or RSVPs electronically to: Mhowell.sdwf@outlook.com or 605-453-0895

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DANGEROUS WILD ANIMALS ENCROACHING ON SOUTH DAKOTA NEIGHBORHOODS

June 5, 2023

By: Bart Pfankuch

SPEARFISH, S.D. — Holly Hansen doesn't have hard data to prove that potentially dangerous wild animals are entering residential areas with greater frequency, but she does have some pretty strong anecdotal evidence.

In early May, a black bear entered her suburban Spearfish property and killed 16 ducks, chickens and turkeys, she said. Large paw prints in the mud and two piles of bear scat provided evidence of the daytime intruder's identity.



A mountain lion climbed a tree in a residential area in Spearfish in May, near two schools and two parks. (Photo: Spearfish Police Department)

On May 23, an adult mountain lion was hunkered down in a tree at a home on Wyoming Court, well within Spearfish city limits and not far from two schools, a recreation center and two parks. State game officers tranquilized the lion and safely relocated it before any people were endangered. However, the property owner posted a note on social media indicating that her children likely walked beneath the big cat, whose method of killing animals can include an ambush from a tree limb overhead.

Also in May, a resident near Whitewood, between Spearfish and Sturgis, reported that a suspected mountain lion had killed a foal found dead on her ranch, according to the Lawrence County Sheriff's Office.

Those incidents came amid numerous other wild animal sightings reported in residential areas across South Dakota. Among them: a mountain lion photographed on a street in west Rapid City in March and an encounter at Sertoma Park in Sioux Falls in May where a woman walking her dogs had to carry the canines and run from two coyotes that chased her.

"If they're coming into town and they're comfortable, that's a different level of concern," said Hansen, who has had mountain lions, coyotes, skunks and now a bear visit her Spearfish property, though only the bear attacked animals. "If they're in your stuff, tearing animals apart and eating them, it's a dangerous situation."

Report of mountain lion above kids concerning, official says

Some wildlife interactions in residential areas are to be expected in South Dakota, where numerous cities border the Black Hills National Forest and other animal habitats.

This paw print found on the property of Holly Hansen of Spearfish measures nearly five inches across and is believed to be that of a black bear that barged into her property and ate more than a dozen farm fowl. (Photo: Courtesy Holly Hansen)

But the lion removed from Spearfish in May should increase concerns about future interactions with humans, said Terry Mayes, a vice president of the South Dakota Wildlife Federation.

"He wasn't up there to sleep overnight because that is their normal prey activity," Mayes said. "They ambush from a branch above, and that's how they get their major kills, including deer and elk. They disable it and eat that animal pretty much entirely, so there's a potential for an encounter that could be very bad."

Officials from the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks — the agency tasked with responding to wild animal encounters — were unwilling to answer questions about the frequency and potential risks of wild animals encroaching into residential areas.

Mike Apland, a GFP supervisor in Spearfish, did not return calls or a text message seeking comment from News Watch.

GFP spokesperson Nick Harrington declined to answer questions about

the topic or arrange an interview for News Watch despite numerous email and phone requests.

Animal encounters a global issue

Expanding research into wildlife habitat and human encounters reveals a consistent theme. Encroachment of urban life into animal habitat across the world is increasing. As a result, so are human-animal interactions.

A 2019 study by Colorado State University researchers found that housing and other development had intruded on protected wildlife areas and could reduce them by as much as 12% by 2030.

As urban areas across the world continue to expand, they increasingly shrink habitat for wild animals.

The greater interface between wild animals and residential and developed areas leads to a change in how wild animals behave. It makes them even more likely to brush up against unsuspecting humans, according to a 2020 review of 83 wildlife studies published in the journal *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*.

That study concluded that 9 in 10 wild animals adapted to their new urban habitat by changing their diets to include more human foods. They also reduced their range of movement. Both changes could make them more likely to enter or even reside entirely in urban areas.

A July 2020 National Geographic article examined the rising incidence of wildlife in urban areas. It included a map showing how one collared coyote in 2014 had a den atop a parking garage in Chicago and traveled along elevated train tracks and other urban corridors from Michigan Avenue downtown and several miles along Lake Michigan to the city's south side.

The mountain lion that Spearfish police tranquilized in May after it wandered into a residential area. (Photo: Spearfish Police Department)

Increased interactions bad for people and animals

The increasing interface between wild animals and humans in non-wild areas is not good for either side of the equation. But it's far worse for the animals who find themselves in unfamiliar settings and subject to car accidents or euthanization, said Megan Howell, executive director of the non-profit South Dakota Wildlife Federation.

"I think it's harder on the animals for sure because they don't have the habitat they need. And they're put in a situation where they don't have malicious intent, they're just subject to new situations," she said. "And in those situations, we do need to keep humans safe."

While feeding habits, a change in availability of food or water or illness can lead wild animals into residential areas, the biggest reason for increasing human interactions is loss of habitat for animals across South Dakota and the world, Howell said.

"We've lost so much habitat. And not only that, but it's more fragmented, so the habitat isn't in big chunks, which is what most wildlife needs to thrive," Howell said. "When they lose their habitat, that's when we have more interactions."

Small steps to possible improvement

Farmers and urban planners can improve practices to maintain animal habitat and provide buffers between wild areas and residential or crop lands, Howell said.

Public education can help residents maintain suburban or rural properties in ways that reduce animal interactions.

And government and environmental groups can continue to seek money

and methods to put more land under protection.

“Everyone that has an interest in wildlife or any natural resources, we need to remember that it’s ours and we need to protect it,” she said. “For the federation, we personally take it as a responsibility to protect the natural resources because they are a public trust.”

Mountain lions, and the hunt, hot topics in S.D.

Mountain lions have a long and storied history in South Dakota, and the hunting season remains a controversial program for many.

The mountain lion population was strong in the 1800s but rapidly declined amid unregulated hunting in the early 1900s to the point where the animal was listed as a state threatened and protected species from 1978 to 2003. A hunting season was approved in 2005 and has been in place since.

Due to difficulty of pursuit and sometimes challenging weather (light snow is best for tracking and sighting), hunters have had a hard time reaching the state’s annual quota of 60 total lions or 40 females killed.

The Black Hills season runs from December to April, and prairie hunting is allowed year-round. Hunters are allowed to use dogs in the hunt in Custer State Park and on some other public lands.

Big male mountain lion topped 150 pounds

About 3,000 to 4,000 lion licenses are sold each year, and 2011-2012 was the last time the quota was reached, with 73 animals taken in the Black Hills and Custer State Park.

In recent years, the kill total has ranged from a low of 21 in 2018-2019 to a recent high of 51 total in 2019-2020. So far in 2023, 44 lions have been killed, the largest a 153-pound male estimated to be 7½ years old taken in January in Pennington County.

A 2021 proposal to expand use of hounds to hunt on some public lands outside Custer State Park was opposed by numerous residents who wrote to the GFP before the commission voted in favor. Their comments shone a light on the emotions surrounding the lion hunt overall in South Dakota.

Some argued that the rules could decimate the state’s population of roughly 300 lions, while others decried the lion hunt as existing only to provide hunters with a trophy.

“I am very opposed to a pointless mountain lion season,” Katie Gilmore of Harrisburg wrote. “Shooting animals for food serves a purpose, trophy hunting does not.”

Others were opposed to the use of dogs in lion hunting, which often culminates in a lion being flushed up a tree where it can be shot.

“It is bad enough we have a hunting season on mountain lions when there is no need for one, but to allow the use of hounds is truly despicable,” wrote Teresa Hicks of Rapid City. “This isn’t hunting. It’s cruel and unsportsmanlike.”

But the GFP and some wildlife groups support the hunt as an important way to manage the state’s lion population. The season continues “as a management tool to manage mountain lion populations at a desired level,” according to the GFP website.

Deer population may influence interactions

In addition to habitat loss, the declining deer population in the Black Hills may be another reason mountain lions are migrating into residential areas, according to Mayes with the South Dakota Wildlife Federation, who has become an animal behavior expert.

Deer populations — a primary food source for mountain lions — have declined slightly due to animal losses caused by the emergence of chronic wasting disease and epizootic hemorrhagic disease, a viral illness spread by midge flies, Mayes said.

One metric of deer population is the annual harvest by hunters, which reached a low of roughly 20,000 per year in the late 1970s, rebounded to nearly 100,000 a year in 2010 and recently has hovered closer to 50,000 annually.

Along with population changes, more deer have taken up full-time residence in South Dakota cities. That has caused more than 300 car-deer crashes and \$1 million in property damage a year in Rapid City, said Mayes, who serves on the Rapid City wildlife management board.

In recent years, Mayes said, more deer have become part of established herds that are born, live and die entirely inside city limits. That not only dramatically increases the likelihood of animal interactions with humans but theoretically could attract more lions into buffer lands in and outside the urban area.

The high population of deer in Rapid City has led to six years of an annual culling by city sharpshooters, who removed 237 deer in January and February 2023, according to city records.

A devastating loss of family’s fowl

Hansen, the Spearfish area resident, said the bear that tore up her yard and killed her fowl entered her property sometime during the daylight hours of Mother’s Day while she and her sons were off fishing.

She keeps animal feed and garbage in metal containers with strong lids to reduce enticements for wild animal visits, but she has experienced a mountain lion on her deck and other close calls with coyotes and other critters.

The bear climbed a wood pile and broke through a fence before clawing and tearing up her animal houses, killing numerous farm fowl but also a “silly turkey” that followed her around, pecked at windows to get attention and had become somewhat of a pet.

“I walked out there, and it was pretty devastating. There were dead animals and animal parts everywhere,” she said. “The bear had torn off a panel attached with deck screws, and he tore off wood and wire.”

The bear scat found on her property contained corn and egg shells, which Hansen said likely came from attacks the bear reportedly made on her neighbors’ properties.

Seeking greater information sharing

Hansen said the bear attack and recent mountain lion sightings around Spearfish have heightened her concerns to where she tries not to do chores after dark and traverse her property with a dog or other person present.

“I’ve seen more and more mountain lions in the past year and more and more coyotes,” she said. “They say there’s never been a mountain lion attack in South Dakota. But there’s also never been a bear killing this many animals, so maybe anything is possible, and it’s just a matter of time.”

Hansen said she has shared her bear story with neighbors so they are aware. She added that she felt like GFP officials have not done enough to inform the public about wild animal encounters on her property and in other areas of South Dakota. “I think we need to know so people can be prepared,” she said.

Risk can be mitigated, not eliminated

Mayes, who has seen mountain lion tracks at his home about a mile from Monument Hospital in Rapid City, said wild animals will adapt to their surroundings fairly quickly and do what they must to survive, even if it means traipsing into areas populated by humans.

“They’re adaptable, they know where the food is, and with them it’s all about survival,” he said.

Mayes said that regardless of the species, people need to realize that animal encounters are always possible, and that some basic precautions can reduce the risk of a negative interaction.

He urged people not to feed wildlife, to keep animal feed and household garbage safely secured, and to drive slower and be more aware of potential animal movement at dusk, overnight and dawn.

“We have to make peace with the fact that we’re going to interact. And we have to know that you can do things to mitigate that, but you can’t eliminate it,” he said.

WITH CRP ACRES DWINDLING NATIONALLY, CONGRESS SEEKS REFORMS.

BY: ABBEY STEGENGA

As the September expiration date of the 2018 Farm Bill approaches, several members of Congress hope to further the program's conservation efforts and strengthen enrollment incentives.

HENRY, S.D. – For nearly 20 years, Carolyn Eck and her husband rented out their pastureland for cattle grazing northwest of Watertown, near Warner Lake. The land has not been tilled since before Eck moved to the property in 2003, she said.

It wasn't until 2018, when cattle had mowed down the pasture like every other year, that Eck believed something was amiss with her land. When she looked out upon her pasture, she was devastated.

"I just thought, 'Something isn't right.' It looked almost barren, starved. I don't know the accurate way to describe it," Eck said.

The following year, Eck enrolled 140 acres in the federal Conservation Reserve Program, which encourages landowners to protect environmentally sensitive land by not farming it.

Those enrolled in CRP enter a 10- or 15-year contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and receive an annual rental payment. In exchange, CRP participants plant species that create habitat for wildlife and improve the land's overall health and quality.

Roughly four years into her contract, Eck said her CRP land has welcomed more wildlife and has acted as an educational tool on rehabilitation for farmers and environmental groups.

With a 37% decrease in the number of national CRP acres since 2007 and a continued need to preserve environmental health, landowners and several members of Congress hope to see program reforms in the next farm bill.

Payment max hasn't changed since CRP's first year in 1985

Under legislation that's pending in Congress, future CRP participants could receive more than double the current payments. They also could receive more financial assistance in managing the land.

The CRP Improvement Act, which Republican Sen. John Thune of South Dakota and Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota re-introduced in January, proposes several changes:

- Raise the current annual payment limitation of \$50,000, which was set in 1985 when the program started, to \$125,000 to account for inflation and increasing land prices.
- Partially reimburse farmers for establishing infrastructure needed to support livestock grazing on approved CRP land, such as fences and water distribution.
- Assist landowners in paying for mid-contract management activities, which are actions that landowners undertake to disturb the land. According to the USDA, management activities mimic events like storms, grazing and fires, which support the growth and diversity of native plants by naturally disturbing the land. However, the CRP Improvement Act would not help with costs related to haying or grazing management.
- Permanently install State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) under Continuous CRP. SAFE is a CRP initiative in which farmers



Carolyn Eck stands in front of the land she enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program in 2019 on her property northwest of Watertown. She currently has 140 acres in the program. (Photo: Abbey Stegenga / SD News Watch)

establish wetlands, grasses and trees to create habitat and food sources for threatened or endangered wildlife species. Owen Fagerhaug, South Dakota's Farm Service Agency conservation program manager, said a limitation prevents USDA from enrolling more than 25% of a county's eligible cropland acres in CRP. However, if the county agrees, the USDA can waive that limit to enroll land in Continuous CRP, which targets specific conservation practices, such as wetland buffers. If the bill passes, SAFE acres would also be able to bypass the county CRP acreage limit.

Currently, the CRP Improvement Act sits with the U.S. Senate's Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. The bill was referred to the committee after Thune and Klobuchar re-introduced it in January.

If Congress cannot come to an agreement by the 2018 Farm Bill's expiration, it could extend the current farm bill for several months while members decide the fate of the 2023 Farm Bill.



Tall grasses border the fence surrounding Carolyn Eck's CRP land near Watertown. According to the USDA, CRP grasses reduce soil erosion, create wildlife habitat and improve water quality. (Photo: Abbey Stegenga / SD News)

A conservation-centered program

South Dakota currently has the most CRP acreage it has had since the program's inception in 1985 and is among the highest nationwide.

South Dakota had 2,104,715 acres enrolled in CRP as of May, accounting for 9.15% of total CRP acres in the U.S. The Rushmore State now has the third-largest number of CRP acres, behind Texas and Colorado, according to USDA data.

Still, Fagerhaug said South Dakota counties are not near the 25% acreage cap.

"(CRP) is a program to help environmentally sensitive land, improve wildlife habitat, soil erosion, water quality, wind erosion and just conservation in general," he said.

Fagerhaug said the term "environmentally sensitive" encompasses varying resource concerns that must be addressed to improve a landscape.

"That could be a buffer area around a wetland to help improve the water quality. That could be some field windbreaks or farmstead shelter belts to improve wind erosion, provide livestock shelter," Fagerhaug said.

Pete Bauman, a South Dakota State University Extension Natural Resources Field specialist, said CRP leads to a host of environmental benefits. CRP incorporates diverse plant species that attract pollinators, which in turn attract insects that bring in baby chicks, he said.

"We can use these lands without abusing them, and we still reap the benefits of the water quality, erosion control, wildlife habitat," Bauman said.

Impacts are bigger than just the land

CRP also encourages South Dakota to claim ownership of its downstream impact on neighboring states, Bauman said.

“If you want clean water, you don’t want it to run off a soybean field. You want it to soak into the ground. If it goes into the ground, it’s a filter. The ground becomes a filter. If (water) runs off the ground, the ground becomes a source of pollution,” said Dennis Hoyle, a third-generation Edmunds County farmer and long-time CRP landowner.

Hoyle, who has been a board member of the South Dakota Soil Health Coalition for eight years, has witnessed the difference in CRP soil firsthand.

After a heavy rainfall, he drove through his neighborhood and found sloughs filled with water that had run off the fields and into the wetlands. When he stopped by a section of his CRP land, he encountered a much different scene.

“I could have walked through that slough. I barely got my socks wet. Because (the water) stayed put. The land absorbed it,” Hoyle said.

Rehabilitation, wildlife conservation and education motivated Eck to enroll in a 15-year CRP contract.

“Along the way, there’s always something that we can learn from the land and so it’s important. I think that’s how I see it as an educational tool,” Eck said.

Conservation Reserve Program not without its critics

While many conservationists support CRP for its environmental effects, some critics say the program has several downfalls.

A 2012 research paper published by the Council on Food, Agricultural & Resource Economics, or C-FARE, notes that many of the studies on CRP’s economic impact on rural communities occurred during the first 10 years of the program.

Several of the studies the paper lists from the 1990s found that CRP had negative impacts on rural economies.

One of the studies analyzed the “median household income, poverty and population” of 19 southwestern Minnesota counties that had 15% of their land in CRP in 1998. The report suggested that “CRP enrollment is associated with lower median household incomes and lower populations in farming-dependent counties.”

More recent concerns with CRP center around the fact that CRP takes cropland out of production. As a result, some say the program also takes away farming opportunities from young producers.

At a House Agriculture Subcommittee hearing in May, Republican U.S. Rep. Brad Finstad of Minnesota said young farmers in his state have told him that higher rental rates cause competition between the federal government and beginning farmers looking to rent land.

Research from the University of Florida says some opponents of CRP believe the program’s budget should be cut to help decrease the federal budget deficit.

South Dakota’s annual CRP rental payments totaled nearly \$104 million in 2022. The national total reached \$1.7 billion that year, according to the USDA.

News Watch contacted six people who may have had concerns about CRP but received only one response from someone who would not speak about it on the record.

Other CRP-focused bills proposed

With 2023’s status as a farm bill year, Midwestern legislators aren’t the only ones looking to improve CRP:

- U.S. Sens. Cory Booker, D-N.J., and Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa., introduced the CRP Reform Act in May. The legislation would ensure CRP focuses on enrolling highly-erodible land rather than highly-productive land. It would also cap the total number of CRP acres at 24 million for the 2024-2028 fiscal years, down from the 27 million acre cap of 2023.
- U.S. Reps. Kim Schrier, D-Wash., and Dan Newhouse, R-Wash., introduced the Eliminating Needless Administrative Barriers

Lessening Efficiency for Conservation Act in April. The bill would ensure the permanent installment of SAFE under CRP, similar to the CRP Improvement Act.

- U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., proposed the CRP Amendments Act in April, which would expand CRP to include a subprogram for the conservation of citrus agricultural land.

CRP’s beginnings: ‘There were farmers that ... just quit’

CRP got its start with the Food Security Act of 1985.

Throughout the 1980s, the U.S. agriculture industry suffered a farming crisis. Many farmers fell into debt as the country experienced a suppressed farm economy, high interest rates and inflation, Bauman said.

“There were farmers that sold out, just quit. The farm crisis got its name legitimately. It was tough,” Hoyle said. “I heard of a few farmers that went around behind the barn and didn’t come back.”

Hoyle recalls buying a tractor and financing it at a 9% interest rate around 1979. A year later, the interest had risen to 19%.



A bee lands on a delphinium near Caroline Eck’s house near Watertown. (Photo: Abbey Stegenga / SD News Watch)

“Giving up was never an option. This is all I wanted to do. When I was 3, I decided what I was going to do, and I’ve done it,” Hoyle said.

Hoping to alleviate their financial burdens, some farmers planted more crops, from fence row to fence row.

“So if you’re a producer, if you’re a farmer, the only way you think you can dig yourself out of that hole is to produce more. And it wasn’t working,” Bauman said.

In an effort to increase production, many farmers plowed and planted land that previously went unfarmed because it was lesser quality cropland.

“When you start breaking and farming what you might call marginally productive lands, you have two things going against you: you have much higher input costs to produce that crop and then you’ve got the threat of lower yield,” Bauman said.

Marginal lands are likely to include slopes and hilltops, be erosion prone or have low-land drainage, he said. The establishment of the CRP program attempted to place marginal land back under a perennial cover to reduce erosion, soil loss and overall production, Bauman said.

CRP’s introduction entices landowners

At the time of the first CRP sign-up, the program paid double what rent paid, Hoyle said.

“My dad has always been conservation minded. And he thought, ‘Okay, here’s a chance we can rest our land, be good for wildlife and get paid at a profit,’” he said.

CRP’s infancy was largely successful, as the program had more than 32 million acres enrolled by 1990. With marginally productive land and input costs higher than normal, an option to not farm that land again enticed farmers to enroll in CRP, Bauman said.

“And then I suppose the reality is the non-permanence of it. That knowing that 10 or 15 years down the road, if you really felt it was important to break that grass back out, I guess that probably appealed to some people,” Bauman said.

Nearly 38 years later, proposed legislation could ensure the program continues to support landowners and their acres.

“I don’t know that (the bill) is going to save any small town or family farm,” Hoyle said. “But CRP is good for wildlife. It’s good for the soil, good for the environment, so there’s a benefit there.”

29 - 90 SPORTSMAN'S CLUB MAKES A DONATION IN HONOR OF EMMET KEYSER

On Tuesday, May 30th, 2023, the 29 - 90 Sportsman's Club donated \$1000.00 towards the purchase of a trackchair in honor of Emmett Keyser for the work he has done with NGOs throughout his career with the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks. Through his engagement efforts, he was able to develop close working relationships with these various NGO's which led to many successful projects being completed across the state which benefitted both the natural resources of South Dakota and many times provided more or better access for its citizens and our guests.

With that being said, "The members of the 29 - 90 Sportsman's Club will miss Emmett and his wisdom and wish him and his family the best in his retirement."

People in attached picture from left to right: Karen Keyser, Emmett Keyser, Megan Keyser, Michael Samp, Jeff Bickel, Mark Willadsen, Charles Rokusek and Dean Schueler.

(The Keyser Family, Michael Samp, Volunteer Fundraiser for Operation-Mobility (in partnership with the SD Parks and Wildlife Foundation))



FISH POPULATIONS AFFECTED BY SEVERE WINTER KILL, RESTORATION EFFORTS

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR

Winter kills had a larger-than-average impact on the state's fish populations in 2022-23, the state's fisheries program manager told the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission last week.

"It was, unfortunately, really prime conditions for winter kill across South Dakota," said Jake Davis. "All regions experienced some winter kill to some level on some of their systems."

During winter, a lack of dissolved oxygen in bodies of water can lead to a "winter kill."

The conditions that cause a winter kill begin to form when lakes and rivers freeze over. The ice and snow cover prevents photosynthesis, preventing aquatic plants from producing oxygen. Decomposing plant and animal remains, meanwhile, continue to consume the limited amount of available oxygen.

The severity of a winter kill depends on factors like the duration and thickness of the ice and snow cover, the size and depth of the body of water, and the availability of alternative habitats for fish to seek refuge.

The shallow wetlands and creeks of South Dakota, with their limited capacity to hold dissolved oxygen under ice, were particularly affected during the winter of 2022-2023.

"We have a lot of systems that are quite shallow, and what that means, generally, is that capacity to store dissolved oxygen under the ice is a lot lower than a deeper system with higher volume," Davis said.

The combination of low water levels from the fall drought and the winter's heavy snowfall exacerbated the situation. However, Davis said that winter kill can have positive outcomes, especially in reducing populations of undesirable species like common carp and black bullhead, which are challenging to manage through human intervention.

Game, Fish and Parks relies on reports from both their staff and the



Gov. Kristi Noem and Lt. Gov. Larry Rhoden joined Game, Fish and Parks fisheries staff in their restocking efforts on May 8,

public to identify winter kills. Staff regularly conduct winter checks, while conservation officers engage with landowners and monitor systems for signs of a kill. The damage assessment involves "test netting," where trap nets are set to determine the extent of the kill and tally the remaining fish. Such assessments guide stocking strategies for restocking fish in affected water systems.

Winter kill severity varied across South Dakota. In the west, severe kills were observed in four water bodies, while the central and southeastern regions recorded winter kills in 21 and 22 water bodies, respectively. The situation in the northeast was still being assessed

at the time of the briefing, as ice cover remained in that area.

"There were an awful lot of systems that didn't experience winter kill, too," Davis noted.

Game, Fish and Parks is restocking through their hatcheries and the trap-and-transfer method. Hatchery-raised walleye, largemouth bass, bluegill, and rainbow trout are commonly stocked into the state's water bodies. Adult fish from excess populations in certain fisheries can also be moved to other systems to improve angling opportunities and boost the reproductive potential of the transferred fish, Davis said.

"We have restocked most of these systems, or we're in the process of doing that," He said, pointing to GF&P fisheries staff having conducted dozens of restocking efforts across the state in recent weeks.

Davis assured the public that restocking efforts were well underway, with most affected systems already restocked. Numerous lakes and water bodies were not affected, he said, and offer excellent fishing opportunities.

SUPREME COURT WETLANDS DECISION HAS SD WATER ADVOCATES WORRIED

A recent U.S. Supreme Court wetlands decision may have implications for wetlands in South Dakota, which has a law that says state environmental regulations and rules cannot be more strict than federal ones.

A wetland is generally viewed as an area of land that is covered or soaked with water for at least part of the year. On May 25, the Supreme Court determined that the federal Clean Water Act only applies to wetlands that are always connected via surface water to “navigable” waters, such as rivers or lakes that have enough water volume and depth for boat travel. That decision came in response to a lawsuit from an Idaho couple who disputed the Clean Water Act’s applicability to their building plans.

Conservation groups react

Many conservation groups disagree with the ruling. They point out that a wetland does not need a surface water connection to interact with other water. For example, preliminary findings from a study showed the Big Sioux River is exchanging water with underground aquifers near Watertown via subsurface connections.

“This ruling defies science, the law and common sense,” said Jared Mott, conservation director for the Izaak Walton League of America, which advocates for healthy wildlife and habitats, and clean water.

Jim Murphy is the director of legal advocacy for the National Wildlife Federation. He has worked on Clean Water Act issues for more than two decades and has represented environmental organizations before the U.S. Supreme Court. He said the decision will “scale back regulations and make it easier for development to occur.”

“The decision disincentivizes producers to conserve wetlands where selling the area to a developer previously wasn’t an option,” Murphy said. “Because that wetland was previously protected.”

Wetlands purify water by trapping sediment, pollutants and livestock waste. Wetlands can also absorb large amounts of water, helping mitigate flood risks. And they provide essential habitats for numerous species.

Impact in South Dakota

Some wetland advocates worry the Supreme Court’s decision means states are now in charge of protecting many of the wetlands that are no longer protected by the Clean Water Act.

“And that’s not great, given the state’s relatively hands-off approach to water regulations,” said Jay Gilbertson, who manages the East Dakota Water Development District, based in Brookings.

That is a view shared by Brad Johnson, president of South Dakota Lakes and Streams and a former chairman of the state Board of Water and Natural Resources.

“Only in the most egregious cases does the state use the enforcement tools they have,” Johnson said. “The state will always side with agriculture, not the environment.”

Gilbertson and Johnson are also concerned about a state law that says no environmental rule “may be more stringent than any corresponding federal law, rule, or regulation governing an essentially similar subject or issue.”

“And so, is the Supreme Court’s definition of a wetland now the state’s?” Gilbertson asked.



The sun sets on a wetland northwest of Hartford, South Dakota. (Joshua Haiar/SD Searchlight)

The state Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources “is still evaluating the full impact” of the Supreme Court opinion, department spokesperson Brian Walsh said in an emailed statement. He said the opinion “does provide welcome clarity on the federal government’s authority under the Clean Water Act, which we believe is a victory for South Dakota and our agricultural community.”

U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-South Dakota, issued a statement following the Supreme Court’s decision. Johnson said the decision “is a huge win for rural America. Navigable waters cannot include every small puddle, stream, and ditch. I’m glad our agricultural producers will finally have some

certainty. I’ll continue working with my colleagues in Congress to prevent the Biden Administration from placing overly burdensome regulations on our producers.”

Aspects of federal impact uncertain

Wetlands in South Dakota have been afforded protection under state administrative rules that define wetlands as “areas inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, including swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.” The rules require a federal permit to fill wetlands, and the permits are issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rather than state regulators.

The corps generally has had authority over wetlands with multiple kinds of connections to lakes and rivers, including underground or temporary connections. However, given the Supreme Court’s new definition of what constitutes a connection, it’s unclear if the corps will continue overseeing wetlands that do not have a permanent surface connection.

“We have had minimal to no guidance at this point,” said Steve Naylor, South Dakota wetland program manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “It’s just too early to tell.”

Travis Entenman, managing director of Friends of the Big Sioux River in Sioux Falls, said in a statement that while it is too early to know the precise ramifications, “Overall, this will be a big blow to water quality protections and a serious narrowing of the Clean Water Act.”

Some wetlands are unlikely to be impacted, according to Todd Frerichs, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in South Dakota. Those include wetlands that have been voluntarily protected by easements, publicly owned wetlands, and those protected because of a federal requirement that says farmers who convert wetlands risk losing eligibility for agricultural subsidies.

Frerichs said the Fish and Wildlife Service protects about 750,000 acres of wetlands in the state, including about 600,000 through voluntary agreements with landowners.

“Changes and debates about the Clean Water Act do not not impact these easements,” Todd Frerichs said.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Brad Johnson, who is quoted in this story, has worked periodically as a freelance reporter and commentary writer for South Dakota Searchlight.

59TH YOUTH CONSERVATION CAMP - BY BOB SCHAEFFER

For the 59th year, young campers across South Dakota and all over the states Minnesota, Ohio, California, Iowa, Nebraska traveled to Black Hills to attend camp. This year we had 78 campers in attendance. Campers, along with counselors and staff, gathered at Camp Bob Marshall to spend the week of June 4th – 10th learning about wildlife and conservation. The annual SDWF Youth Conservation Camp provided these young people an opportunity to make new friends, hear about the message of conservation, and have a fun-filled, exciting time. The weather 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 a tour of the Geology Museum School of Mines and the campus. The second group spent the morning at the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks Outdoor Campus West in Rapid City. What a great facility. The campers toured the facility and participated in activities of archery, kayaking, canoeing. In the afternoon the two groups switched venues. Tuesday morning the Custer State Park provided programs for the campers. The young people had the opportunity to select from the following hikes: Little Devils Tower, Prairie Trail Hike and Lovers Leap Hike. In the afternoon, they were at the Norbeck Education Center and had classes about Forestry Management, Fire Management, Wildlife Management, and Range Management. On Wednesday and Thursday, campers selected sessions ranging from rifle, handgun, shotgun, and muzzle loading shooting, Angostura Reservoir fishing, fly fishing, Birding in the Black Hills, Building a Bow, Building a Spinning Rod, Dutch Oven Cooking, Outdoor Photography, Turkey hunting, A Day in the Life of a Wildlife Biologists, Wilderness Survival, Boating Basics, Can You Paddle, Stream Sleuths, Trapping in South Dakota. Because campers selected which programs they wanted to attend, the response was overwhelmingly positive.

On Friday, campers divided into groups and did Water Habitat Restoration by building habitat from PVC material for Bismarck Lake and clearing out cattails. The other group went to Meeker Ranch to remove old fencing as well as building Analog Beaver Dams. In the afternoon the two groups switched venues.

The evenings were also filled with interesting presentations. Monday evening, Maggie Engler of the Black Hills Raptor Center brought several birds of prey including a ferruginous hawk, barn owl and several smaller raptors and described each bird in detail. Tuesday evening was just a fun day with many games and activities for the campers to get to know each other. On Wednesday all campers traveled to Mt. Rushmore for the spectacular lighting ceremony. Thursday evening Liz Renner with the Game Fish and Parks gave her presentation on how healthy streams are. She also told the campers that she was a caper like everyone else and it gave her a path to become a biologists. On Friday had awards and a picture slide show, and fun games.

Every year the camp proud to present awards to the outstanding individuals and campers. The Roehr Conservation Award is presented to outstanding girl camper. AvaMarie Armbright from Aberdeen was selected for this honor. The Erdman Conservation Award is presented to the outstanding boy camper. This year's winner is Treyton Zdenek



from Sioux Falls. Both winners will be invited to camp next year at no cost and as CIT's (counselors in training).

Each year, awards are presented to individuals who have made a significant contribution to camp. The Putzier Conservation Award, presented to a individual or organization who is not a member of the staff, went to Barb Bauer who has been driving campers around to and from camp over 20 years. The McClellan Conservation Award is presented to a staff member who contributed to camp. This year the award was presented to Josh Halsey of Aberdeen.

We want to thank all the presenters and volunteers who worked hard to make camp a success. A special thanks to the professionals of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks and Custer State Park. They devoted their time and expertise to make the SDWF Youth Conservation Camp a unique learning experience.

I would like to thank my 2 new Assistant Directors, Kemari Blumhardt, Jayden Halsey who worked very long hours getting everything prepared for camp. Mike McKernan for his many years of all different roles including Director, Counselor. Mikaela Blumhardt who is the Camp Nurse. A BIG THANK YOU to Maggie Lindsey, Education Ser and Game, Fish & vices Coordinator for the GFP. Maggie coordinates and lines up all the classes from Custer State Park and Game, Fish & Parks and does an awesome job.

I also want to thank all the counselors, CIT's and the clubs and individuals who helped make the 2023 edition of Conservation Camp a success. Thanks to Chuck Rokusek, an avid supporter of our camp, who recruits kids from the Sioux Falls area and raises money to send them to camp. Thank You, Great Plains Outdoorsmen for your generous Grant for support. National Wildlife Turkey Federation, NE Walley Club, Pheasant Forever Clubs, Beadle County Sportsman Club, Hamlin County Conservation District. ALL THE PARENTS for supporting the campers. Thanks to Scheels All Sports for providing t-shirts for the campers.

Check us out on our Facebook page, SDWF Youth Conservation Camp. The entire camp and staff is privileged to have spent a week with a group of young people from all across South Dakota, and the country, and WE are looking forward to next June 2nd to 8th, 2024.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION FARM BILL FLY-IN

In late March, Dave Ditloff called to ask if I would be interested and available to participate in a national fly-in to help lobby for conservation components to the upcoming Farm Bill. The existing Farm Bill is up for renewal and Congress is in the process of drafting a new bill. After some soul searching, I agreed. I have spent so much time in meetings and airports that it takes a major need to get me at either. I have been a career long advocate for good, sound, Farm Bill conservation programs. In South Dakota our wildlife is totally dependent on conservation positive Farm Bills. Especially those involving landscape sized land set aside conservation efforts such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The most recent example occurred from the mid-1980s until just recently. Our pheasant populations and frankly most other wildlife species reached near historic levels during these very positive Farm Bill conservation programs. Sadly, the new emphasis on “working lands” has emasculated most of these landscape sized set aside CRP acres in favor of land that is annually used for agricultural production.

The Fly-In occurred on April 24 and 25 in Washington, DC and was hosted by the National Wildlife Federation. We had orientation and training at their DC headquarters on Monday and attended scheduled visits with our congressional offices on Tuesday. About 30 affiliate members attended from about 20 states. We also met as a group to “de-brief” and share how our Congressional meetings went.

I was highly impressed with the work done by the NWF staff. I found them to be very knowledgeable, dedicated, and passionate about what they were doing. The lobbyist training was excellent. We learned to 1) arrive a little early but never late, 2) be prepared and be concise, 3) make sure we specifically ask what we wanted, 4) leave appropriate background information for the staffers to use and 5) follow up with a brief e-mail to thank them and to re-emphasize our most important points.

The staff had all the appointments scheduled and our briefing folders ready. A NWF staff attended each interview but left the messaging mostly up to the affiliate members. I met with staff from Rep. Dusty Johnson, Sens. John Thune and Mike Rounds. I laid out the basics of “nesting habitat 101” to each so they fully understood the need for secure nesting/fawning cover for our SD wildlife species. From bobolinks to prairie chickens to pheasants to ducks to deer and antelope and how important the Farm Bill was to South Dakota’s wildlife. I don’t know if it sunk in but I sure tried to simplify and explain the critical need for secure nesting cover – grasses and forbes that are allowed to mature (it takes 3 years to establish) and remain undisturbed for 5 – 7 years.



The latest buzz for wildlife habitat is “working lands” and it’s largely a myth. Working lands are used annually, annually hayed or grazed and will never reach a full and necessary potential for nesting/fawning habitat. It strongly appears that the movement of CRP and other wildlife Farm Bill programs is headed down the “working lands” path. Working lands are being pushed hard by the Ag Industry thus are being fully embraced by our elected officials.

In summary, I tried hard to pitch both the NWF and our local South Dakota needs to our Congressional staffers.

The Farm Bill is still very much in the early stages of being developed and written and the existing Farm Bill may or may not be extended while a new Farm Bill is being drafted and negotiated so a lot can happen between now and its conclusion. The best guess is that the real work will begin this fall and likely continue into next year.

SD Wildlife Federation Donors

At the 2003 Winter Board Meeting the SDWF Board created the SDWF Legacy Council. The council was created to allow recognition of the people who support SDWF above and beyond their membership and raffle donation.

Thank you to the following donors for their contributions to the SDWF. Please consider becoming a member of 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 \$1,000 & above; Level IV Buffalo \$401-\$999; Level III Elk \$301-\$500; Level II Deer \$201 - \$300; and Level I Pheasant \$100-\$200.

AUG 2021- JULY 2022

LEVEL V EAGLE

TERRY & LAREE MAYES - SD
CHUCK & GINGER SCALET - KS
RYAN TUPPER - SD

LEVEL III ELK

NICKLAS LIPP - SD
MARLIN R STAMMER - CA
BRAM WEIDENAAR - SD

AUG 2021- JULY 2022 - CONT.

LEVEL II DEER

RICHARD MILLER - SD
STEVE BERBERICH - SD
JOHN COOPER - SD
JEFFRY SCHERSCHLIGHT - SD
F HERBERT WISWALL - SD
BOB SCULL - SD
MARK BEITELSPACHER - SD
MIKE DOUGLAS - CA
KEITH PLAVEC - IL
TERRY SAMPSON - SD
JIM DAHLBERG - SD
DUANE PETERS - SD

LEVEL I PHEASANT

BOB SCHLUTER - MN
RICH ANDRESEN - SD
FRED BAKER - OH
KRISTIE BAKKER - SD
MIKE BOOCOCK - SD
DAN BORMANN - WI
CARL BRAKEBUSH - WI
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KEVIN CUMMINGS - AZ
JIM SKROVIG - SD
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KENT MUNDON - SD
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JANUARY 2023-JUNE 2023

LEVEL I PHEASANT

ORVILLE MILLER
LARRY LEWIS
DON ROEHR
JIM LEVILLE
KEVIN FUERST
STAN MURPHY
GREG LARSON
DARREL REINKE
DAVE BISBEE
ROB RYKHUS
CARL BRAKEBUSH

LEVEL II DEER

STEPHEN WHEELER

LEVEL III ELK

29/90 SPORTSMEN'S CLUB
LEVEL IV BUFFALO
BLACK HILLS SPORTSMEN CLUB

2023 South Dakota Wildlife Federation's
Custer State Park Buffalo Shoot

\$15 each or 3 for \$35

Drawing to be held at Annual Convention, August 2024. Winner will receive \$3,300 cash and will need to apply to Custer State Park to enter the non-trophy buffalo lottery, or they may spend the money as they wish. If they draw a license, the cash prize should cover the cost of the license and included guided rifle or bow hunt in Custer State Park for the year in which they apply.

Void where prohibited by law. Your presence or contribution not necessary to win.

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\$25 each

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4. Glock 17 9 mm
5. Ruger American .243 Rifle
6. Ruger Security-9 9mm
7. Glock 42 .380 Black
8. Winchester SXP 3 1/2 Hybrid Max 7
9. Savage Axis II 6.5 Creedmoor
10. Benelli Nova 20 ga.
11. Ruger 10/22 Combo
12. Del-Ton AR
13. Remington 870 Express
14. Ruger 77 7mm Wood
15. Ruger American 17 cal.
16. Benelli Nova 12 ga.
17. Winchester SXP 3 1/2
18. Alex Pro Guardian
19. Savage 93 22 Mag
20. Remington BDL 243
21. 10/22 Ruger Combo

- One gun will be awarded for every 100 - tickets sold.
- SDWF reserves the right to offer a cash settlement or substitute gun of equal or greater value.

Drawing to be held at Winter Board Meeting, December 2024

Void where prohibited by law. Your presence or contribution not necessary to win

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PO Box 7075, Pierre, SD 57501
(605) 224-7524 • www.sdwf.org

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2023 SDWF 21 Gun Giveaway Ticket

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Phone
Please Write Legibly

2023 SDWF 21 Gun Giveaway Ticket

Name
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City State Zip
Phone

2023 SDWF 21 Gun Giveaway Ticket

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City State Zip
Phone

1 Year Membership @ \$30	Total	\$	
1 Buffalo Shoot Ticket @ \$15	Total	\$	
3 Buffalo Shoot Tickets @ \$35	Total	\$	
21 Gun Giveaway Ticket @ \$25 ea.	Total	\$	
6 Buffalo Shoot Tickets and Membership @ \$60	Total	\$	
6 Buffalo Shoot Tickets and 3 – 21 Gun Tickets @ \$125	Total	\$	
6 Buffalo Shoot Tickets, 3 – 21 Gun Tickets and Membership @ \$140	Total	\$	
	Total	\$	

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