

NDG&F April 15th Newsletter

Four Advisory Board Meetings Postponed

The four North Dakota Game and Fish Department district advisory board meetings scheduled for tonight and tomorrow have been postponed.

The meeting in Belfield is rescheduled for Monday, April 22; Esmond and Watford City are rescheduled for Tuesday, April 23; and Fordville is rescheduled for Wednesday, April 24.

Hunting, Fishing License Fees Increase in 2014

Increases in North Dakota hunting, fishing and boat registration fees recently passed by the state legislature will not take effect until 2014.

Terry Steinwand, director of the State Game and Fish Department, said the current three-year boat registration cycle runs through December, and 2013-14 hunting and fishing licenses are in effect through next March. Therefore, registration fees for boat owners will go up Jan. 1, 2014, while hunters and anglers will see the license increase in April, 2014.

“This is the first time in many years we’ve seen such a wide range of license fee increases,” Steinwand said. “State legislators, hunters and anglers voiced overwhelming support during committee hearings and when voted on the floor. We heard that same type of support at statewide advisory board meetings last fall.”

Steinwand said the main issue the legislature deliberated was how much of an increase was appropriate. “There were some avid hunters and anglers in the state who wanted to see a substantial increase in prices to support habitat, enforcement, fisheries and access, but it was important that the increases didn’t price anyone out of the outdoors experience,” he added. “The feedback we’ve been getting from hunters and anglers is that this legislation strikes the right balance.”

Despite these increases, Steinwand said North Dakota hunting and fishing licenses are still less expensive than equivalent licenses in surrounding states.

Senate Bill 2231 passed the house by a vote of 77-15 and the senate 39-6.

Effective Jan. 1, 2014, the cost to license a motorboat under 16 feet in length, and all canoes, will increase from \$12 to \$18; motorboats from 16 feet to less than 20 feet in length from \$24 to \$36; and motorboats at least 20 feet in length from \$33 to \$45.

Effective April 1, 2014:

resident small game hunting license will increase from \$6 to \$10

nonresident small game hunting license from \$85 to \$100

resident big game hunting license from \$20 to \$30 (youth big game license remains at \$10)

nonresident big game hunting license from \$200 to \$250
nonresident big game bowhunting license from \$200 to \$250
resident furbearer license from \$7 to \$15
resident wild turkey license from \$8 to \$15
combination license from \$32 to \$50
nonresident waterfowl hunting license from \$85 to \$100
statewide nonresident waterfowl license from \$125 to \$150
nonresident furbearer and nongame license from \$25 to \$40
resident swan license from \$5 to \$10
nonresident swan license from \$25 to \$30
resident crane license from \$5 to \$10
nonresident crane license from \$5 to \$30
and a nonresident reciprocal trapping license from \$250 to \$350

In addition, the resident application fee for moose, elk and sheep will increase from \$3 to \$5, and a habitat restoration stamp required for the general game license increases from \$10 to \$17, with \$8 (instead of \$5) of each habitat stamp sold placed in the Game and Fish Department's private land habitat and access improvement fund.

Changes to fishing licenses effective April 1, 2014 include:

resident fishing license will increase from \$10 to \$16
resident age 65 and older or permanently disabled fishing license from \$3 to \$5
resident husband and wife fishing license from \$14 to \$22
resident paddlefish tag from \$3 to \$10
nonresident paddlefish tag from \$7.50 to \$25.50
nonresident husband and wife fishing license from \$45 to \$60
nonresident fishing license from \$35 to \$45
nonresident three-day fishing license from \$15 to \$25

and a nonresident 10-day fishing license from \$25 to \$35

In addition to Senate Bill 2231, other bills regarding license fees were recently signed into law.

House Bill 1264, in part, charges a fee of \$5 for residents and \$50 for nonresidents to hunt statewide during the early Canada goose season. These dates no longer count against the 14-day regular season nonresident waterfowl license. This law is in effect for the 2013 hunting season.

Effective April 1, 2014, House Bill 1434 allows a North Dakota veteran with a 50 percent service-related disability to buy a fishing license for \$5.

A complete list of hunting and fishing related bills is available on the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov.

Paddlefish Snagging Season Opens May 1

North Dakota's paddlefish snagging season opens May 1 and is scheduled to continue through the end of the month. However, depending on the overall harvest, an early in-season closure may occur with a 36-hour notice issued by the state Game and Fish Department.

Legal snagging hours are from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. One tag per snagger will be issued. Snagging is legal in all areas of the Yellowstone River in North Dakota, and in the area of the Missouri River lying west of the U.S. Highway 85 bridge to the Montana border, excluding that portion from the pipeline crossing (river mile 1,577) downstream to the upper end of the Lewis and Clark Wildlife Management Area (river mile 1,565).

Mandatory harvest of all snagged paddlefish is required on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. On these days, all paddlefish caught must be tagged immediately. The use or possession of a gaff hook within one-half mile in either direction of the Highway 200 bridge on the Yellowstone River is illegal at any time during the snagging season.

Snag-and-release of all paddlefish is required on Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays. Those planning to participate during snag-and-release-only days need to have in their possession a current season, unused paddlefish snagging tag.

If the season closes early because the harvest cap is reached, an extended snag-and-release-only period will be allowed for up to seven days immediately following the early closure, but not to extend beyond May 31. Only snaggers with a current season, unused paddlefish snagging tag are eligible to participate. Only a limited area at the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers is open for this extended season snagging opportunity. Use or possession of gaffs is prohibited on snag-and-release-only days, and during the snag-and-release extension period.

All paddlefish snaggers must possess a paddlefish tag in addition to a valid fishing license and certificate that may be required. Cost of a paddlefish tag is \$3 for residents and \$7.50 for nonresidents.