

## **NDG&F July 29th Newsletter**

### **Record Number of Walleye Stocked**

Excellent walleye fingerling production from the Garrison Dam (9.7 million) and Valley City (1.3 million) national fish hatcheries resulted in a record 11 million walleye fingerlings stocked into state waters. Jerry Weigel, North Dakota Game and Fish Department fisheries production and development section leader, said with a record number of walleye waters across the state, there has never been a larger demand for walleye production. "We are fortunate to have the production capability of the two federal hatcheries to help address this demand," he said.

According to Weigel, spring rains raised water levels at many fisheries across the state, resulting in conditions that should be good for survival of the 30-day old fish that averaged about 1.25 inches in length when stocked.

Altogether, 110 lakes and rivers were stocked in North Dakota, including 4.3 million fingerlings in Lake Sakakawea, 863,000 in Stump Lake, 495,000 in Lake Darling, 329,000 in Lake Ashtabula, 321,000 in Heart Butte Reservoir, 218,000 in Paterson Lake, 205,000 in Bowman-Haley Reservoir and 200,000 in Lake Metigoshe.

One common observation Weigel noted while traveling across the state was the amount of fishing taken place, both from shore and from a boat. "There has never been a better time to fish for walleye," he added. "Statewide, there are a lot of great opportunities, and a very good chance of success."

### **Early Canada Goose Season Announced**

North Dakota's early Canada goose season is set, and bag limits and licensing requirements have changed from last year.

The season will open Aug. 15 and continue through Sept. 15, except in the Missouri River Zone where the season ends Sept. 7. This year, states can offer a possession limit of three times the daily bag limit for most migratory birds. The early Canada goose season has a limit of 15 daily and 45 in possession. Limits and shooting hours for the early season are different from the regular season. Shooting hours during the early season are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset daily.

In addition, a new state law requires hunters to purchase an early Canada goose season license. Residents need a \$5 early Canada goose license and a general game and habitat license. Also, residents age 16 and older need a small game license. Nonresidents need only a \$50 early Canada goose license, and the license is valid statewide without counting against the 14-day regular season license.

A federal duck stamp for hunters age 16 and older, and Harvest Information Program certification, is required beginning Sept. 1.

Hunters who purchase a license through the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website at [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov), or instant licensing telephone number (800) 406-6409, can easily get HIP certified. Otherwise, hunters can call (888) 634-4798 and record the HIP number on their fishing, hunting and furbearer certificate. Those who registered to hunt the spring light goose season in North Dakota do not have to register with HIP again, as it is required only once per year.

Waterfowl rest areas, closed to hunting during the regular season, are open during the early season. Most land in these rest areas is private, so hunters may need permission to hunt.

The early hunting season is intended to reduce local Canada goose numbers. Despite liberalized regulations the past several years, with longer seasons, large bag limits and expanded shooting hours the statewide population remains high, with numbers well above population goals.

For additional information and regulations, hunters should refer to the Game and Fish Department website.

### **Early Canada Goose Licenses Sold Electronically**

A new state law requires both resident and nonresident early Canada goose season hunters to purchase a special license.

All resident hunters, regardless of age, must buy a \$5 early Canada goose season license, in addition to having a general game and habitat license. Residents age 16 and older also need a small game license. Nonresidents must purchase a \$50 early Canada goose license. The license is valid statewide, and does not have a limit on the number of days a nonresident can hunt. Nonresidents under age 16 as of Sept. 1 qualify for the resident rate if their state has a reciprocal youth licensing agreement with North Dakota. A federal duck stamp is required beginning Sept. 1 for hunters age 16 and older.

[Early goose season licenses](#) are only available through electronic purchase, either online at the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website, [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov); by calling (800) 406-6409; or at license vendors in counties that are linked to the Game and Fish Department's online licensing system. In counties that are not on the Game and Fish system, the licenses are not available with the paper general hunting licenses.

County auditors and all their authorized license vendors that are part of the Game and Fish Department electronic licensing system are: Adams, Benson, Bottineau, Bowman, Burleigh, Cass, Dickey, Grand Forks, Grant, McIntosh, Mercer, Morton, Ramsey, Rolette, Sargent, Stark, Steele, Stutsman, Walsh, Ward and Williams.