

## **NDG&F November 17th Newsletter**

### **Salmon Spawn Goal Reached**

Fisheries crews have completed their annual salmon spawning operation on the Missouri River System after collecting roughly 1.3 million eggs.

Dave Fryda, North Dakota Game and Fish Department Missouri River System supervisor, said about two thirds of the eggs came from Lake Sakakawea and the remainder from the Missouri River below Garrison Dam.

The average size of Lake Sakakawea females was 8.5 pounds, almost 3 pounds larger than 2013 and among the highest weights documented since the inception of the salmon program. The Missouri River females, which are typically larger than the lake fish, averaged 10.4 pounds.

“The 2014 salmon spawning run was successful in obtaining enough eggs to meet next year’s stocking goals.” Fryda said. “However, contrary to recent years, we might not be able to provide excess eggs to Montana and South Dakota to meet their egg goals.”

Fryda said the number of salmon in the 2014 spawning run was greatly reduced throughout the Missouri River reservoirs due to the lingering effects of the 2011 flood. “Salmon stocked during the 2011 flood would have been a major component of this year’s spawning run,” he said. “Unfortunately, large numbers of juvenile and adult salmon were entrained through the dams during the record flows of 2011.”

Plans for 2015 are to stock Lake Sakakawea with 400,000 salmon, with none scheduled for the river below Garrison Dam, Fryda said.

Chinook salmon begin their spawning run in October. Since salmon cannot naturally reproduce in North Dakota, Game and Fish Department and Garrison Dam National Fish Hatchery personnel collect eggs and transport them to the hatchery.

Once the eggs hatch, young salmon spend several months in the hatchery before being stocked in Lake Sakakawea.

### **Some Refuges Open to Late-Season Upland Game**

Hunters are reminded that several North Dakota national wildlife refuges open to late-season upland game bird hunting the day after the deer gun season closes.

Arrowwood, Audubon, Des Lacs, J. Clark Salyer, Lake Alice, Lake Zahl, Long Lake, Lostwood, Tewaukon (pheasants only), and Upper Souris NWRs open Nov. 24.

However, portions of each refuge are closed to hunting. Hunters should contact refuge headquarters for map leaflets designating closed areas and other restrictions: Arrowwood 701-285-3341; Audubon 701-442-5474; Des Lacs 701-385-4046; J. Clark Salyer 701-768-2548; Lake Alice 701-662-8611; Lake Zahl 701-965-6488; Long Lake 701-387-4397; Lostwood 701-848-2722; Tewaukon 701-724-3598; and Upper Souris 701-468-5467.

National wildlife refuges are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Hunters are reminded that use of nontoxic shot is required on all USFWS lands. State regulations found in the [North Dakota 2014-15 Small Game Guide](#) apply. Seasons for pheasant, sharp-tailed grouse, Hungarian partridge and ruffed

grouse close statewide on Jan. 4, 2015.

### **Fishing Tournaments Require 30-Day Notice**

Organizers planning fishing tournaments, including ice fishing contests this winter, are reminded to [submit an application](#) along with fishing tournament regulations to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department at least 30 days prior to the start of the event.

The 30-day advance notice allows for review by agency staff to ensure the proposed tournament will not have negative consequences or conflicts with other proposed tournaments for the same location and/or time.

Tournaments may not occur without first obtaining a valid permit from the department.

In addition, the number of open-water tournaments on lakes Sakakawea and Oahe, the Missouri River and Devils Lake are capped each year, depending on the time of the year and location. Sponsors for tournaments on these water bodies must submit their application to the department prior to Jan. 1 to ensure full consideration.