

NDG&F April 27th Newsletter

Boat North Dakota Course

Boat owners are reminded that children ages 12-15 who want to operate a boat or personal watercraft this summer must first take the state's [boating basics course](#).

State law requires youngsters ages 12-15 to pass the course before they operate a boat or personal watercraft with at least a 10 horsepower motor. In addition, major insurance companies give adult boat owners who pass the course a premium discount on boat insurance.

The course is available for home-study from the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's Bismarck office. Two commercial providers also offer the course online, and links to those sites are found on the department's website at gf.nd.gov.

While the home-study course is free, students will be charged a fee to take it online. The online provider charges for the course, not the Game and Fish Department. The fee stays with the online provider.

Upon completion of the online test, and providing a credit card number, students will be able to print out a temporary certification card, and within 10 days a permanent card will be mailed.

The course covers legal requirements, navigation rules, getting underway, accidents and special topics such as weather, rules of the road, laws, life saving and first aid.

For more information contact Nancy Boldt, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, by email at ndgf@nd.gov; or call 701-328-6300.

Spring Mule Deer Survey Complete

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department completed its annual spring mule deer survey in April, and results indicate western North Dakota's mule deer population has increased 24 percent from last year.

Bruce Stillings, big game supervisor, said the increase is a result of less severe winters the past couple of years, no harvest of antlerless mule deer during the past three deer hunting seasons, and improved fawn production. The 2015 index is 16 percent higher than the long-term average.

"In order to maintain further population growth we need to maintain a conservative management approach, with no antlerless mule deer harvest again in 2015," Stillings said.

Biologists counted 2,376 mule deer in 306.3 square miles during this year's survey. Overall mule deer density in the badlands was 7.8 deer per square mile, which is up from 6.3 deer per square mile in 2014.

The spring mule deer survey is used to assess mule deer abundance in the badlands. It is conducted after the snow has melted and before the trees begin to leaf out, providing the best conditions for aerial observation of deer. Biologists have completed aerial surveys of the same 24 study areas since the 1950s.

Summer BOW Set Aug. 7-9

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program is accepting registrations for the annual summer workshop Aug. 7-9 at Lake Metigoshe State Park, Bottineau.

Enrollment is limited to participants age 18 or older. Workshop fees of \$150 cover instruction, program

materials, use of equipment, all meals and lodging.

Participants can choose from a number of different activities, including archery, firearms, fishing, hunting, paddling sports, wildlife and plants, cooking and outdoor knowledge.

BOW workshops are designed primarily for women with an interest in learning skills associated with hunting, fishing and outdoor endeavors. Although open to anyone age 18 or older, the workshops are tailored primarily to women who have never tried these activities or who are beginners hoping to improve their skills.

Women interested in [attending the summer workshop](#) can register online, or print and mail an information brochure and enrollment form at the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov. More information is available by contacting Alegra Powers at 701-527-3075, or email ndgf@nd.gov