

NDG&F November 28th Newsletter

Berthold, Hankinson, Jamestown, Bismarck Advisory Board Meetings Postponed

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department's advisory board meetings scheduled for tonight and tomorrow in Berthold, Hankinson, Jamestown and Bismarck have been postponed two weeks due to inclement weather.

The meetings in Berthold and Hankinson are rescheduled for Monday, Dec. 12; and Bismarck and Jamestown are rescheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 13.

District 2 – Counties: Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, Mountrail, Pierce, Renville and Ward

Date: Dec. 12 – 7 p.m.

Location: Berthold Sportsmen Club, 210 Main St., Berthold

Host: Berthold Sportsmen Club

Contact: Joe Lautenschlager, 721-1882

Advisory board member: Robert Gjellstad, Voltaire, 338-2281

District 5 – Counties: Cass, Ransom, Richland, Sargent, Steele and Traill

Date: Dec. 12 – 7 p.m.

Location: American Legion (south of Lake Elsie), Hankinson

Host: Hankinson American Legion

Contact: Terry Puetz, 640-3294

Advisory board member: Duane Hanson, West Fargo, 367-4249

District 6 – Counties: Barnes, Dickey, Foster, Griggs, Logan, LaMoure, McIntosh, Stutsman and Wells

Date: Dec. 13 – 7 p.m.

Location: The Bunker, 1520 3rd St. SE, Jamestown

Host: United Sportsmen

Contact: Larry Kukla, 320-4182

Advisory board member: Joel Christoferson, Litchville, 973-4981

District 7 – Counties: Burleigh, Emmons, Grant, Kidder, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Oliver, Sheridan and Sioux

Date: Dec. 13 – 7 p.m.

Location: North Dakota Game and Fish Department, Bismarck

Host: North Dakota Natural Resources Trust

Contact: Keith Trego, 220-0978

Advisory board member: Dave Nehring, Bismarck, 214-3184

Ice Awareness for Hunters, Anglers

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department is urging winter anglers and late-season hunters to use extreme caution when venturing out on ice until the state has experienced a prolonged period of subfreezing temperatures.

Heavy snow and wind accompanying a late November snowstorm over parts of the state are creating slush in many lakes, which is typically not as solid when it freezes, compared to a water surface that freezes under calm conditions with no precipitation.

Ice thickness is never consistent, especially early in winter, and can vary significantly on the same body of water. Edges become firm before the center.

A few reminders include:

- Snow insulates ice, which in turn inhibits solid ice formation, and hides cracks, weak and open water areas.
- Avoid cracks, pressure ridges, slushy or darker areas that signal thinner ice. The same goes for ice that forms around partially submerged trees, brush, embankments or other structures.
- Ice thickness is not consistent and can vary significantly even in a small area. Ice shouldn't be judged by appearance alone. Anglers should drill test holes as they make their way out on the lake, and an ice chisel should be used to check ice thickness while moving around.
- Daily temperature changes cause ice to expand and contract, affecting its strength.
- The following minimums are recommended for travel on clear-blue lake ice formed under ideal conditions. However, early in the winter it's a good idea to double these figures to be safe: 4 inches for a group walking single file; 6 inches for a snowmobile or all-terrain vehicle; 8-12 inches for an automobile; and 12-15 inches for a pickup/truck.

These tips could help save a life:

- Wear a personal flotation device and carry a cell phone.
- Carry ice picks or a set of screwdrivers to pull yourself back on the ice if you fall through.
- If someone breaks through the ice, call 911 immediately. Rescue attempts should employ a long pole, board, rope, blanket or snowmobile suit. If that's not possible, throw the victim a life

jacket, empty water jug or other buoyant object. Go to the victim as a last resort, but do this by forming a human chain where rescuers lie on the ice with each person holding the feet of the person in front.

- To treat hypothermia, replace wet clothing with dry clothing and immediately transport victim to a hospital.

Register to Darkhouse Spearfish

All individuals who participate in darkhouse spearfishing [must first register](#) online at the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website, gf.nd.gov, or through any Game and Fish Department office.

Two notable changes from last year related to spearing are that materials used to mark holes must be in possession of anglers and spearers as soon as a hole greater than 10 inches in diameter is made in the ice.

In addition, Sweet Briar Dam and Braun Lake are now open to darkhouse spearfishing, while Larimore Dam and Wood Lake are closed to darkhouse spearers.

North Dakota's darkhouse spearfishing season opens on most state waters Dec. 1. The season extends through March 15. Legal fish are northern pike and nongame species.

Darkhouse spearing is allowed for all residents with a valid fishing license and for residents under age 16. Nonresidents may darkhouse spearfish in North Dakota if they are from states that offer the same privilege for North Dakota residents.

North Dakota residents who do not have a fishing license may spear during the winter free fishing weekend Dec. 31 and Jan. 1, but they still need to register to spear.

Last year, a record 4,328 participants registered to darkhouse spearfish, an increase of nearly 1,000 from 2014.

All waters open to hook and line fishing are open to darkhouse spearing except:

- East Park Lake, West Park Lake, Lake Audubon – McLean County
- Heckers Lake – Sheridan County
- Larimore Dam – Grand Forks County
- McClusky Canal
- New Johns Lake – Burleigh County
- Red Willow Lake – Griggs County
- Wood Lake – Benson County

Anglers and spearers should refer to the [2016-18 North Dakota Fishing Guide](#) for more information.

Winter Anglers Reminded of New Regulations

Anglers fishing North Dakota waters this winter are reminded of new regulations implemented since last year.

- The statewide possession limit for bluegill, yellow perch and white bass has been reduced from 80 to 40 each.
- Sweet Briar Dam and Braun Lake are now open to darkhouse spearfishing, while Larimore Dam and Wood Lake are closed to darkhouse spearers.
- Materials used to mark holes must be in possession of anglers and spearers as soon as a hole greater than 10 inches in diameter is made in the ice. In the past, anglers could search for materials used for markers after making holes.
- Fishing poles must be easily visible and within a maximum distance of 150 feet of a participating angler.
- All unoccupied fish houses must be removed from all waters after midnight March 15.
- North Dakota residents can fish for free during a free fishing weekend Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.

North Dakota anglers are encouraged to refer to the [2016-18 North Dakota Fishing Guide](#) or the State Game and Fish Department's website for winter fishing regulations.

In addition, anglers can visit the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov, for an extensive list of [fishing questions and answers](#).

Late-Season Hunting Opportunities End Soon

North Dakota waterfowl hunters are reminded the statewide duck and white-fronted goose seasons close Dec. 4. However, duck hunting in the [high plains unit](#) reopens Dec. 10 and continues through Jan. 1, 2017.

In addition, the season for Canada geese closes Dec. 22, except for the [Missouri River Zone](#), which closes Dec. 30. Light goose hunting closes statewide Jan. 1, 2017.

Archery deer, fall turkey, sharp-tailed and ruffed grouse, partridge, pheasant and tree squirrel hunting seasons continue through Jan. 8, 2017.