

NDF&G January 11th 2010 Newsletter

Winter Anglers Reminded to be Courteous

A year ago, much of North Dakota was covered with four feet of snow, a prelude to record depths that prevented ice fishing access to many lakes throughout the state. And now, with above average snow cover, some areas are beginning to experience access problems similar to last year.

Greg Power, fisheries chief for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, said ice fishing is a popular pastime in North Dakota, and when access is a problem some try to create their own trail.

“When commonly used roads to access fishing lakes are blown shut, anglers often try to find alternative routes where the snow drifts are not as high,” Power said. “With that in mind, anglers are encouraged to be mindful of private property.”

Last winter, the department received several complaints from landowners regarding people driving through fields in order to access a lake. Power said simple common courtesy can prevent this.

“If ice anglers access a lake by a new trail that crosses private land, they should first talk to a landowner,” Power said. “Often times the local landowner are the first to open access to a fishing lake by using their tractor or front-end loader.”

Once on the ice, anglers are reminded it is illegal to leave fish behind. When a fish is caught, anglers must either immediately release the fish back into the water unharmed, or reduce them to their daily possession.

For anglers who fillet fish on the ice, entrails and sides should be placed in a trash bag and properly disposed of upon returning home.

The Game and Fish Department encourages all anglers to pick up after themselves as litter left on the ice will eventually end up in the lake, Power said.

Hunters Asked to Participate in Post-Season Surveys

North Dakota hunters receiving a questionnaire are encouraged to complete the survey and return it to the state Game and Fish Department.

Jerry Gulke, data processing coordinator, said deer bow, small game, waterfowl and turkey questionnaires were recently mailed to randomly selected hunters. “The number of surveys returned to us has been declining in recent years to where it is becoming a problem,” Gulke said. “We really need the data.”

It is important hunters complete and promptly return the survey, Gulke said, even if they did not hunt.

“The harvest survey is very important because it allows us to evaluate the hunting season,” Gulke said. “What we are able to determine include the number of hunters, amount of hunting activity and size of the harvest.”

A follow-up survey will be mailed to those not responding to the first survey.

Classes Still Open at Winter BOW

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department’s Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program still has openings at one-day winter workshops Feb. 20 and 21 at Lake Metigoshe State Park, Bottineau.

Women interested in snowshoeing and tracking, winter survival and cross-country skiing should register immediately due to limited space available. The cost is \$50 for one day or \$90 for two days.

Preregistration with payment is required. Equipment and snacks will be provided.

Information and registration forms are available by accessing the education/outreach link on the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov; or by contacting Nancy Boldt, North Dakota Game and Fish Department, 100 N. Bismarck Expressway, Bismarck, ND 58501-5095; (701) 328-6312; or e-mail ndgf@nd.gov.