

NDG&F April 12th Newsletter

Paddlefish Snagging Season Opens May 1

North Dakota's paddlefish snagging season opens May 1 and is scheduled to continue through the end of the month. However, depending on the overall harvest, an early in-season closure may occur with a 36-hour notice issued by the state Game and Fish Department.

Legal snagging hours are from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. One tag per snagger will be issued. Snagging is legal in all areas of the Yellowstone River in North Dakota, and in the area of the Missouri River lying west of the U.S. Highway 85 bridge to the Montana border, excluding that portion from the pipeline crossing (river mile 1,577) downstream to the upper end of the Lewis and Clark Wildlife Management Area (river mile 1,565).

Mandatory harvest of all snagged paddlefish is required on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. On these days, all paddlefish caught must be tagged immediately. The use or possession of a gaff hook within one-half mile in either direction of the Highway 200 bridge on the Yellowstone River is illegal at any time during the snagging season.

Snag-and-release of all paddlefish is required on Mondays and Tuesdays. Those planning to participate during snag-and-release-only days need to have in their possession a current season, unused paddlefish snagging tag. Use or possession of gaffs is prohibited on Mondays and Tuesdays, and, if it occurs, during the snag-and-release extension period.

If the season closes early because the harvest quota is reached, an extended snag-and-release-only period will be allowed for up to seven days immediately following the early closure, but not to extend beyond May 31. Only snaggers with a current season, unused paddlefish snagging tag are eligible to participate. Only a limited area at the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers is open to this extended season snagging opportunity.

All paddlefish snaggers must possess a paddlefish tag in addition to a valid fishing license and certificate that may be required. Cost of a paddlefish tag is \$3 for residents and \$7.50 for nonresidents.

Hunting Guide and Outfitter Test Set for May 8

Individuals interested in taking the guide and outfitter written exam are reminded to preregister by calling the North Dakota Game and Fish Department at 328-6604.

The test is scheduled for Saturday, May 8 at 1 p.m. at the department's main office in Bismarck. The test is given periodically to anyone interested in becoming a hunting guide or outfitter in the state.

In addition to passing a written exam, qualifications for becoming a guide include a background check for criminal and game and fish violations, certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and standard first aid, and employment by or contract with a licensed hunting outfitter.

Hunting outfitter eligibility requirements include the guide qualifications. In addition, a potential outfitter must have held a hunting guide license for two years and have proof of liability insurance.