

NDG&F June 13th Newsletter

Fall Turkey Season Set, Online Applications Available

North Dakota's fall turkey season is set with 4,630 licenses available to hunters, according to Stan Kohn, upland game management supervisor for the state Game and Fish Department.

This year's figure is down 20 percent from last year. However, 1,300 additional licenses may be used early this fall in specific hunting units if turkey reproduction is exceptionally good this spring.

Harvest and population data from hunting units in the southwest and in two units in the central part of the state indicate turkey numbers have decreased substantially due to poor production and chick recruitment from 2008-2010.

"However, above-average snowfall the last three winters and normal rainfall this spring has greatly improved habitat conditions in much of the state," Kohn said. "Turkeys will benefit from this improved nesting and brooding habitat. If weather isn't a detriment, the improved habitat conditions could result in better production in many parts of the state this summer."

An experimental hunting season will continue for the USDA-ARS Northern Great Plains Research Lab in Mandan. A maximum of 30 licenses will be available. These licenses will be available at the Game and Fish Department once a person first obtains a permit from USDA-ARS.

An experimental turkey bow hunting season will continue within the city of Bismarck to help control a growing population of birds in residential areas. A maximum of 25 licenses will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis to individuals who are licensed to bow hunt deer within the city. These licenses will be available at the Game and Fish Department in Bismarck once a person has a valid city archery permit.

Hunting units 21 (Hettinger and Adams counties) and 53 (Divide and Williams counties) will remain closed to fall turkey hunting in 2011 because of low turkey numbers.

The fall wild turkey season extends from Oct. 8 through Jan. 8, 2012.

Prospective hunters, including gratis applicants, can apply online, or print out an application to mail, at the state Game and Fish Department's website, gf.nd.gov. Paper applications will be available in mid-June from Game and Fish Department offices, county auditors and license vendors.

Applications are also accepted at the department's toll-free licensing line, (800) 406-6409. A service fee is added for license applications made over the phone.

Applications for the fall season must be postmarked no later than July 6. Only North Dakota residents are eligible to apply in the first lottery. Nonresidents can apply for fall turkey licenses that are still available following the first lottery.

Game and Fish Urges Courtesy at Boat Ramps

Because of high water across the state, access to some of North Dakota's fisheries is difficult, forcing more anglers and pleasure boaters to converge on those ramps and workers offering easier access. With that in mind, boaters are reminded to plan ahead for crowded ramp conditions and exercise patience once there.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department receives a number of complaints every year about overly aggressive behavior at boat ramps. A few simple reminders will help ensure a fluent transition when launching and loading a boat.

Launching

Don't pull onto ramp until your boat is ready to launch.

Prepare for launching in the parking area. Remove covers, load equipment, remove tie downs, attach lines and put in drain plug, before backing onto the ramp.

When ready, pull into line to launch. Wait your turn. Be courteous.

It takes at least two people to efficiently and courteously launch a boat: one to handle the boat and one to take care of the tow vehicle.

Loading

Don't block the loading area with your boat until your tow vehicle is ready to load. Wait until you are clear of the launch area to unload gear.

As soon as your trailer is in the water, load and secure your boat to the trailer.

Remove boat and trailer from the water as quickly as possible.

Get clear of the ramp. Pull into the parking area to finish securing your boat and unload gear.

All water must be drained from watercraft prior to leaving a water body, including livewells. This means fish, including bait, cannot be transported in a livewell containing water.

No aquatic vegetation, or parts thereof, shall be in or on watercraft, motors, trailers and recreational equipment when out of water. Time out of the water needed to remove aquatic vegetation at the immediate water access area (boat ramp) is allowed.

All built-in structures to boats, including livewells and bait compartments, and containers (bait buckets) used to transport legal live bait, must also be free of aquatic vegetation.

MacLean Shooting Range Closed

The MacLean shooting range located near the MacLean boat ramp south of Bismarck is closed until further notice due to overland flooding.

Two alternate public ranges that are open are Schmidt Bottoms and Wilton Mine Wildlife Management Area.

Schmidt Bottoms is located 13.4 miles south of Mandan on ND Highway 1806.

Wilton Mine Wildlife Management Area is approximately two miles east of Wilton.