

NDG&F November 1st Newsletter

Game and Fish Leadership Team Changes

Longtime North Dakota Game and Fish Department division chief Mike McKenna retired at the end of September after a 31-year career with the agency.

An Iowa native, McKenna earned a master's degree from the University of North Dakota and started his Game and Fish career as a natural resources coordinator in 1979. Much of his work involved environmental issues such as wetland drainage, public land management and mitigation for development projects.

In 1989 he became chief of the natural resources division, and in 1999 he assumed leadership of the conservation and communications division.

Taking McKenna's place is Sykeston native Paul Schadewald, former administrative services division chief and also a UND graduate. Schadewald started his Game and Fish career in 1977 as the federal aid coordinator, and had served as administrative services division chief since 1989.

Kim Molesworth, the department's business manager for nearly six years, moved into the administrative services division chief position on Nov. 1. Molesworth, a Mandan native, has an accounting degree from the University of Mary, and before coming to Game and Fish she was the accounting and budget manager for the North Dakota State Penitentiary.

The administrative services division is responsible for the department's budget, federal aid coordination, licensing, printing, procurement, risk management and facility management.

Fall Mule Deer Survey Completed

Aerial observations during the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's fall mule deer survey indicated production was similar to last year.

Bruce Stillings, big game biologist in Dickinson, said observers who accompanied pilots in fixed-wing planes counted 1,613 (1,528 in 2009) mule deer in the October demographic survey. While the buck-to-doe ratio of 0.45 (0.54 in 2009) was similar to the long-term average of 0.43 bucks per doe, the fawn-to-doe ratio of 0.72 (0.74 in 2009) equaled the lowest on record, and was well below the long-term average of 0.94 fawns per doe. This year's fawn production was the same as in 1997, following one of the worst winters on record.

The fall aerial survey, conducted specifically to study demographics, covers 24 study areas and 306 square miles in western North Dakota. Biologists survey the same study areas in the spring of each year to determine a population index.

Deer Season Questions and Answers

Every year the North Dakota Game and Fish Department receives questions from deer hunters who want to clarify rules and regulations. Some common questions are listed below. Hunters with further questions are encouraged to call the department at (701) 328-6300, from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. weekdays, or access the [hunting link](#) at the department's website, gf.nd.gov.

What licenses do I need for deer gun season? A fishing, hunting, and furbearer certificate, the general game and habitat stamp or a combination license, and the deer license. Gratis license holders need only the gratis license.

I received a lottery license, and I own land in another unit. Can I hunt on my land in the other unit with my lottery license? Only if the unit in which your land is located adjoins the unit in which you have the lottery license.

Can I use my first season license during the muzzleloader season? No. The first season license may be used only for the regular deer gun season.

When can additional concurrent season licenses be used? Hunters possessing these unfilled antlerless deer licenses can use them during the archery season with a bow; the deer gun season with a bow, rifle, or muzzleloader; or during the muzzleloader season with a muzzleloader. These licenses must be used for antlerless deer only, and hunters must stay in the unit to which the license is assigned.

I can't find my deer license. What should I do? You must obtain an [application for a duplicate license](#) from the Game and Fish Department – by calling (701) 328-6300 or printing it off the website at gf.nd.gov – or from a county auditor. Fill out the form, have it notarize and return it to the Department along with a fee. You may not hunt without the deer license in your possession.

Can hunters age 12 or 13 purchase and use additional concurrent season antlerless licenses during the regular deer gun season? No, 12- and 13-year-olds are limited to a single antlerless whitetail license valid only during the dates of the youth deer season. However, they can still purchase concurrent licenses for use with a bow in the archery season.

Can hunters ages 14 or 15 purchase and use additional concurrent season antlerless licenses during the regular deer gun season? Yes, but hunters must stay within the unit to which the license is assigned.

Can hunters age 14 or 15 who did not harvest a deer with a youth season license hunt the regular deer gun season with this license? Yes, but you are subject to the restrictions listed on the license.

I was unsuccessful in filling my mule deer buck license in a restricted unit during the youth season. Can I hunt the remainder of the state during the regular gun season? No. You are restricted to the same unit as during the youth season.

I shot a deer, but it is rotten. What can I do? You must take possession of the animal by tagging it. A license only allows you the opportunity to hunt. It is not a guarantee to harvest a deer, or to the quality of the animal.

What should I do if I find a wounded deer? Contact a game warden. Do not shoot the deer unless you want to tag it, or are instructed by the warden to do so.

Is camouflage blaze orange acceptable for the deer gun season? No. You must wear both a hat and outer garment above the waistline totaling at least 400 square inches of solid daylight fluorescent orange.

I hunt with a bow. When do I have to wear orange? During the regular deer gun season you must wear orange. During the muzzleloader season, however, bowhunters do not need to wear orange.

Can I hunt road rights-of-way? Do not hunt on road rights-of-way unless you are certain they are open to public use. Most road rights-of-way are under control of the adjacent landowner and are closed to hunting when the adjacent land is posted closed to hunting.

Can I retrieve a wounded deer from posted land? If the deer was shot on land where you had a legal right to be and it ran on posted land, you may retrieve it. However, you may not take a firearm or bow with you. The department suggests contacting the landowner as a courtesy prior to entering.

What if the landowner says I cannot retrieve a deer from posted land that was shot on land where I had a right to be? Contact a game warden.

Can I drive off a trail on private land to retrieve a deer? Unless prohibited by a landowner or operator, you may drive off-trail on private land once a deer has been killed and properly tagged. You must proceed to the carcass by the shortest accessible route, and return to the road or trail by the same route. However, off-trail driving is prohibited in all circumstances on state wildlife management areas, Bureau of Land Management lands, national wildlife refuges, national grasslands, federal waterfowl production areas and state school land.

Can I transport someone else's deer? Yes, but you will need a transportation permit from a game warden. The license holder, person transporting the animal, and the carcass must be presented to the game warden before the permit is issued.

What if I am going to take my deer head to a taxidermist and meat to a butcher shop? How do I keep the tag with it all? The tag should remain with the head and the carcass tag should remain with the meat.

May I carry a pistol when I am hunting with a deer rifle? Yes, but the handgun must meet minimum requirements listed in the deer hunting regulations to be legal for taking deer.

Can I use a bow to fill my regular deer gun license? Yes. You may use any legal firearm or bow during the regular deer gun season.

Can I carry both bow and gun afield during deer gun season if I have both licenses? Yes, but only if you are going to fill your gun license. No firearms, except handguns, may be in the hunter's possession while hunting with a deer bow license. However, handguns may not be used in any manner to assist in the harvest of a deer with an archery license.

What licenses do I need to hunt on an Indian reservation and whose rules do I follow? If you will be hunting within the reservation and hunting exclusively on Indian lands, only a reservation license is required and tribal regulations apply. If you will be hunting on land owned in fee-title by a non-Indian within the reservation, a state license is required and all state laws, licenses and regulations apply.