

NDG&F December 5th Newsletter

Late-Season Hunting Opportunities End Soon

Late-season hunters still have time to get out in the field and enjoy North Dakota's deer, waterfowl, upland game, turkey, small game and furbearer opportunities.

The season for Canada geese closes Dec. 22, except for the [Missouri River Zone](#), which closes Dec. 30. The Missouri River Zone was created in 2008 to provide additional late season Canada goose hunting opportunities without reducing harvest in areas where crop depredation by Canada geese is a problem. Following the close of the regular Canada goose season, more than 95 percent of Canada geese in the state are within the Missouri River Zone, which has little Canada goose depredation within its boundaries.

Light goose hunting also closes statewide Dec. 30.

High plains duck hunting runs Dec. 10 through Jan. 1, 2012.

Archery deer, fall turkey, sharp-tailed and ruffed grouse, partridge, pheasant and tree squirrel hunting seasons continue through Jan. 8, 2012.

Bobcat, mink and weasel hunting and trapping are open through March 11, 2012. The mountain lion season in zone 2 is open through March 31, 2012.

Muskrat hunting and trapping close May 6, 2012, with trapping restrictions beginning March 12.

Fox, coyote, raccoon, badger and beaver hunting and trapping are open year-round.

Winter Anglers Reminded of Regulations

North Dakota anglers are encouraged to refer to the 2010-12 North Dakota Fishing Guide or the State Game and Fish Department's website for winter fishing regulations.

In addition, anglers can access the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov, for an extensive list of winter fishing questions and answers.

Some winter fishing regulations include:

- A maximum of four poles is legal for ice fishing. However, when fishing a water body where both open water and ice occur at the same time, an angler is allowed a maximum of four poles, of which no more than two poles can be used in open water.
- Tip-ups are legal, and each tip-up is considered a single pole.

- There is no restriction on the size of the hole in the ice while fishing. When a hole larger than 10 inches in diameter is left in the ice, the area in the immediate vicinity must be marked with a natural object, such as a tree branch or tumbleweed, or a brightly painted or colored wooden lath. Markers must be visible from a minimum of 150 feet.
- It is only legal to release fish back into the water immediately after they are caught. Once a fish is held in a bucket or on a stringer, they can no longer be legally released in any water. In addition, it is illegal to catch fish and transport them to another water body.
- It is illegal to leave fish, including bait, behind on the ice.
- Depositing or leaving any litter or other waste material on the ice or shore is illegal.
- Any dressed fish to be transported, if frozen, must be packaged individually. Anglers are not allowed to freeze fillets together in one large block. Two fillets count as one fish.
- The daily limit is a limit of fish taken from midnight to midnight, and no person may possess more than one day's limit of fish while actively engaged in fishing. The possession limit is the maximum number of fish that an angler may have in his or her possession during a fishing trip of more than one day.

Third Cat Taken During Late Season, One More Closes Zone 1

The third mountain lion was taken during the late-season in zone 1 over the weekend. If one more is taken from zone 1 before March 31, 2012, the late-season quota of four will be reached and mountain lion hunting in zone 1 will close immediately.

Zone 1 includes land south of ND Highway 1804 from the Montana border to the point where ND Highway 1804 lies directly across Lake Sakakawea from ND Highway 8, crossing Lake Sakakawea then south along ND Highway 8 to ND Highway 200, then west on ND Highway 200 to U.S. Highway 85, then south on U.S. Highway 85 to the South Dakota border.

The mountain lion season in zone 2, which is the rest of the state outside zone 1, has no quota and is open through March 31, 2012.

The mountain lion season is open only to North Dakota residents. A furbearer or combination license is required.