

# QUWF



Quail & Upland Wildlife Federation

Making a Difference for Wildlife and Clean Streams, One Acre, One Stream, at a Time

## THE HABITAT GUIDE

Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation

### Get teens involved in the outdoors

America's teenagers are seeing a lot less of one another.

The share of high school seniors who gathered with friends in person "almost every day" dropped from 44% in 2010 to 32% in 2022.

The nation's teens have traded face time for Facetime.

Some researchers see teens retreating from social gatherings as key to explaining the wave of adolescent boredom that has swept the nation.

Teens now spend a lot more time communicating electronically and a lot less time hanging out face to face.

Going to the mall and movies has gone down. Driving in the car for fun has gone down. Many kids are now spending 5-7 hours a day on social media.

This is an opportunity to get teenagers involved in snowmobiling!

For all your chapter needs, please call Leslie Casanova [direct](mailto:direct@quwf.org) at Sportsman Insurance Agency at 1-800-925-7767.

In most cases, Leslie can have your insurance the same day!

Also, any questions concerning banquets and/or vendor programs, please call the QUWF National Office at (417) 345-5960.

## Notes from the Dashboard:

The 'Trail of Trash' - Mind your manners or lose the privilege



**By Craig Alderman** — Many areas of the country see the Orange or Camo tide roll in come hunting seasons and with it, the sometimes-huge explosion of people in small rural towns and back country areas across this country. Yes, it is an important boost to the local economy but, and this is a big but, the locals are not enjoying the actions of a few. Remember, this is a privilege not a right.

As a sportsman, and a farmer, I was brought up to respect any land or equipment we owned, borrowed, used, leased or worked. That meant to leave it in better condition than I found it. No trash left behind, pick up any trash you see, fix what you broke or found broken, be courteous to all you may meet, and be careful coming and going to not cause any disturbance. If camping or renting a cabin, be very aware of any unnecessary noise, don't disturb the neighbors. Never, ever, cut any fences or open gates (with permission) that are not in-turn closed and secure again.

Respect the thought that maintaining the land, back roads and facilities, especially campgrounds and cabins costs a lot of time and money today. Don't abuse it. In fact, have you offered to come back off season and help? A good offer is to help mark and sign and clear the land boundaries.

You would think this would be common sense because it is, but it is not common practice. The **"trail of trash"** is a black eye to everyone enjoying or working in the outdoors.

**Noise is as much trash as anything else and causes faster and more aggressive reactions at times, from neighbors.** Excessive noise, loud parties, sighting in guns without prior permission at designated areas or tin can plinking should not even be considered unless triple checked for approval by the landowner and the area is secure and remote for this. Do not ever shoot trees or posts or any sign, don't shoot at night. Try not to come and go at late night hours where neighbor's homes are, the lights and extra noise are an irritant to many.

So why this article, some states are reviewing laws and regulations to control just these types of abuses on backcountry access and rural leases. Many access areas of Colorado formerly open to camping for hunters are now closed because of the abuse of the land and the conditions left behind.

Continued on Page 2

**Continued from Page 1** — Maine is reviewing regulations (laws) asking for local owner and neighbor input. How do you think that will go over? Just stating there is a meeting requirement means there are complaints already.

***If you are a landowner leasing property***, it's your job to mark the boundaries clearly and properly so your people do not trespass on your neighbor's land. That means putting up many more boundary signs than normal and at much closer intervals than just normal boundaries. If you use the heavier mil signs, they should last for decades. Clearly mark and clear the boundary lines and the access and egress roads, if you allow sighting-in shooting, you must make sure the area is secure and ensure what is behind the targets is visible and not a problem. Do not allow shooting into trees or posts or again, no night shooting. No alcohol when guns or bows are out period. A good idea is to provide a map of the land, bordering neighbor houses or dwellings and show the wood roads or trails they can use. If your land is large enough to allow ATV or UTV use, set a speed limit and I advise you add that use to *your liability release you make them all sign*.

In order to continue to enjoy the outdoors we all have to work together to take care of it. Helping the landowners and respecting their properties, facilities and neighbors are all included.

Catch You Across the Creek.

*Craig Alderman is the QUWF executive director.*

## WY Game and Fish opens public comments on three chapters

**CHEYENNE** - The Wyoming Game and Fish Department has opened a comment period and will be holding public meetings across the state to gather input on proposed changes to the following regulations:

- Chapter 2, General Hunting Regulation
- Chapter 28, Regulation Governing Big or Trophy Game Animal or Game Bird or Gray Wolf Damage Claims
- Chapter 42, Mountain Lion Hunting Seasons

Game and Fish is hosting eight public meetings about the regulation proposals.

- July 6 — 6:00 p.m., Laramie, Laramie Game and Fish Regional Office
- July 11 — 6:00 p.m., Cody, Cody Game and Fish Regional Office
- July 11 — 6:00 p.m., Lander, Lander Game and Fish Regional Office
- July 19 — 6:00 p.m., Green River, Green River Game and Fish Regional Office
- July 20 — 6:00 p.m., Jackson, Jackson Game and Fish Regional Office
- July 26 — 6:00 p.m., Pinedale, Pinedale Game and Fish Regional Office

Written comments shall be accepted through 5 p.m. Aug. 4, at any of the above public meetings or by mailing: Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Regulations, 3030 Energy Lane, Casper, WY 82604 or [online](#). Copies of the proposed regulation changes are available on the department website and at the address above in accordance with Chapter 1 Regulation Governing Access to Public Records.

Written comments shall be presented to the Game and Fish Commission prior to their September 2023 meeting in Gillette.



## Turkeys for Tomorrow supporting Iowa research

**BOONE, Iowa** — Scientific analysis will be done on wild turkey carcasses and wild turkey eggs consumed by mammalian carnivores, thanks to a \$15,000 grant from Turkeys For Tomorrow.

TFT's support goes to aid a study now in its third year of a projected decade of work. Remarkable for its scope and thoroughness, the study attaches transmitters to wild turkey hens during the winter, then follows them through the spring, documenting their survival, their nesting success or failures, their use of the habitat and the precise reasons their reproductive efforts come to grief when they do. The genetic study is led by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in collaboration with Dr. Dawn Reding, a conservation geneticist at Luther College.

The funds from TFT will go specifically to support DNA analysis of turkeys and eggs that have fallen to mammalian carnivores to identify species-specific rates of nest predation and whether those change over time within nesting seasons or across years.

“This worked out really well,” said Dan Kaminski, wildlife research biologist at the Boone Wildlife Research Station. “We’ll be using the money this summer. We’re doing genetic analysis of hatched or destroyed eggs, determining the sex ratio of clutches, the survival rate of all and the fates of nests. One of the questions is: ‘Of the nests that fail, how many do so due to predation or simple abandonment, and for the predated nests, which species of mammalian carnivores are responsible?’ The contribution from Turkeys For Tomorrow will help us answer those and other critical questions about nest predators impacting reproduction.”

“This project dovetails well with the other work we’re supporting,” said Ron Jolly, co chairman of TFT.

Turkeys For Tomorrow is a grass roots organization with a dual mission: supporting the improvement of wild turkey habitat through direct action and education of the public, and support of careful scientific research positioned to inform wildlife management strategies and tactics to halt the wild turkeys’ national decline. TFT is supporting similar projects with complementary methods in Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky and Mississippi.

“We want to understand hen survival over time,” Kaminski said. “Our numbers, compared to what we saw in the 1990s, tentatively indicate survival rates have declined. We’re not getting as many poults into the fall population, and we’re working to quantify just why that is.”

“We’re all passionate about helping and saving the wild turkey,” Jolly said. “We don’t want to see them go the way of the bobwhite quail. We want to take direct action to make a difference today, and we want to drive scientific research that lets us make policies that keep populations healthy for generations to come. Some actions require careful scientific study. Others call for simple, common sense. We’re strong supporters of both.”

## MT FWP says corner crossing unlawful

**Editor’s Note: As a landowner who experienced corner crossing, bring cooperative we first allowed it. Then fences were torn down, gates damaged and finally theft of valuable trees. All areas are now fenced off and closed and legal actions are being taken.**

**HELENA** – In light of the recent U.S. Federal District Court Decision in Wyoming pertaining to the issue of corner crossing, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Deputy Director Dustin Temple issued the following statement:

“Corner crossing remains unlawful in Montana, and Montanans should continue to obtain permission from the adjoining landowners before crossing corners from one piece of public land to another,” Temple said. “Wardens will continue to report corner crossing cases to local county attorneys to exercise their prosecutorial discretion.”



PROUD SPONSOR OF



Ask Alexa to play 101.3 Real Country or AM 560 in the Morning, or go online and download the **free app**.

## NE commissioners to consider '24 mountain lion season

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission will consider recommendations for a 2024 mountain lion hunting season at its June 9 meeting in Alma.

The meeting begins at 8 a.m. Central time at the Alma Municipal Golf Course, 102 Dick Brown Memorial Drive.

For the first time, a harvest season will be proposed for mountain lions outside the Pine Ridge. If approved, a Niobrara Unit will be created, encompassing parts of Brown, Cherry, Keya Paha, Rock and Sheridan counties. The objective for the Niobrara Unit will be to provide a harvest opportunity for mountain lions that will allow the population to remain resilient and healthy, while slowing growth of the population.

Mountain lion presence has been documented in the Niobrara River Valley of north-central Nebraska since 2001. There has been a resident reproducing population there since 2013 and information gathered through research suggests a population that is growing and will be resilient to harvest.

Season 1 in the Niobrara and Pine Ridge units would take place Jan. 2 through the end of February. The season would end immediately in a unit if the annual harvest limit or female sub-limit were reached. The Pine Ridge limit would be four mountain lions with a sub-limit of two females, and the Niobrara limit would be two mountain lions with a one female sub-limit. Up to 320 permits would be issued by lottery in the Pine Ridge Unit and up to 160 permits will be issued in the Niobrara Unit. An auxiliary season would be held March 16 through the end of March if the annual harvest limit or female sub-limit were not reached during Season 1 in a unit.

The Commission also will consider changes to the river otter trapping season. The proposal would eliminate the overall season harvest limit and simplify the check-in process by allowing them to be checked within two days after the close of the season and before the sale or transfer of the otter. The requirement of daily checking of season status would be eliminated as well. The proposed season would be Nov. 1, 2023, through Feb. 29, 2024. Each harvester would be limited to one otter per season.

In other business, staff will recommend changes to sportfishing regulations that would allow archery paddlefish permit holders to harvest paddlefish in the spillway below Gavins Point Dam. The north wall and discharge canal would remain closed to archery paddlefish fishing.

The Commission also will consider renaming the Nebraska Game and Parks Outdoor Education Center in Lincoln the Nebraska Game and Parks Turpin Outdoor Education Center in the memory of Dick Turpin, a longtime Game and Parks employee and outdoor enthusiast.

Staff also will conduct a presentation about the recently completed Wetlands of Nebraska Outreach and Education project, which produced a series of products to increase awareness of the importance of wetlands in Nebraska.

## VT: Fires and swimming prohibited in certain areas

With the beginning of summer and anglers fishing from shore, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department reminds people that open fires and swimming are prohibited at all Vermont state fishing access areas.

Open fires and their remnants, create unsafe areas for other anglers and boaters to use and enjoy. The remnants of these fires are also unhealthy for the animals and fish that live in the adjacent waters. Fish and Wildlife cleans up the toxic waste left by open fires on state lands annually at considerable expense.

Swimming at fishing access areas is prohibited due to safety concerns and because the primary uses of the fishing access areas is for launching and retrieving motorboats and for shore fishing.

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department maintains 203 developed fishing access areas on lakes and rivers throughout the state. These areas have allowed uses determined by law, and swimming is not one of them.

The access areas were purchased and are maintained with funds derived from the sale of fishing licenses and motorboat registrations, as well as a federal excise tax on fishing equipment, fishing tackle and gasoline for motorboats. These funding sources explicitly prohibit activities that are in conflict with fishing and boating.

**Continued on Page 6**

**Continued from Page 5** — Fish and Wildlife regulations prohibit certain uses of fishing access areas including, but not limited to — swimming, littering, camping, picnicking, making a fire, parking of vehicles not related to priority uses, and commercial activity.

“Vermont State Game Wardens will be strictly enforcing the rules at state fishing access areas this summer,” said Col. Justin Stedman, Vermont’s Chief Game Warden. “Please help keep our lands clean and open for others to enjoy, and report violations to your local warden or use the anonymous [Operation Game Thief](https://tinyurl.com/yxv8x7tk) online report form on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife website at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yxv8x7tk>. Reports of time-sensitive violations should be called in to a local State Police radio dispatcher who can contact a warden.”

## ALPS celebrates 30 years of outdoor manufacturing

**NEW HAVEN, Mo.** – From humble beginnings in a one-car garage, the vision to bring quality gear to outdoor enthusiasts at an affordable price has led to one of the most successful outdoor manufacturing companies in the U.S. and this year, ALPS (Active Lifestyle Products & Services) celebrates its continued success as the company marks its 30th anniversary.

"Enjoying the outdoors is a blessing in so many ways," said ALPS owner and founder Dennis Brune. "Whether we are camping by a beautiful lakeside with our family, taking a path less traveled deep in the backcountry, or even tag-teaming spring gobblers with a good friend, outdoor adventures edify the soul and instill memories that last forever. For our family and our employees, the outdoor lifestyle and our loyal customers have blessed us greatly."

**1993** — Dennis and wife LaRayne began ALPS in their small garage with the mission to create performance-driven outdoor gear at a reasonable price. What started as a line of fanny packs eventually grew to include tents, packs, camping furniture, sleep systems, and more.

**2007** — With the camping segment firmly established, ALPS expanded to include the ALPS OutdoorZ brand of gear. Taking lessons learned from the camping side, the company focused on designing and producing technical packs and support essentials for the hunting community. Along the way, ALPS OutdoorZ leveraged its success to help support conservation and habitat preservation initiatives with leading organizations in the outdoor sports segment.

**2009** — Not long after setting up ALPS OutdoorZ, the company entered a licensing partnership with Browning to produce camping gear under the Browning Camping brand — gear built to align with Browning's "The Best There Is" philosophy. This was followed by hunting products including blinds, stools, and accessories produced under the Browning Hunting Blinds brand.

**2012** — As the country was finally pulling out of the Great Recession, ALPS introduced another brand called Cedar Ridge. The idea of Cedar Ridge was to provide "starter set" camping gear and accessories for the family-friendly budget. This coincided with a strong push by ALPS to get more young people involved in outdoor recreation.

Continued on Page 7



**RUGER**<sup>®</sup>  
**MAX-9**<sup>™</sup>  
 YOUR NEXT HANDGUN<sup>™</sup>



**Continued from Page 6 — 2023** — Today, ALPS and its family of brands continue to expand through innovation, new product development, and refinement. The latest effort incorporates the company's new R3 initiative. With the mission to Reduce • Reuse • Recycle, the R3 program represents an increased push to use more recycled content in materials and packaging and further mitigate environmental impact.

"As we recognize our thirtieth year of business," Brune continued, "we also celebrate our customers who have brought us here. And in some small way, we live vicariously through them. When we pack a tent or ship a backpack, we often think, 'Where is this going? What adventures will it see? Who is the person who will sleep in this bag? Will there be a young, first-time hunter sitting in this blind when they take their first deer?' From the product designer who first puts pen to paper to our warehouse crew who sends the boxes out the door — it may sound trite or cliché, but it is true — we feel a personal connection to our consumers through each and every product we manufacture."

For more information on ALPS and the company's family of brands, visit [ALPSBrands.com](https://ALPSBrands.com).



## NSSF welcomes Sen. Graham's FFL Protection Act

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — NSSF®, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, welcomes the introduction of the Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) Protection Act, introduced by U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), along with 22 co-sponsors. The bill would strengthen and enhance criminal penalties for thefts of firearms from federally licensed firearm retailers. This legislation sends a strong message to those violent criminals engaging in these illicit activities and helps provide for safer communities, assists law enforcement and protects the livelihoods of firearm retailers.

"This is what true gun safety legislation looks like. Senator Graham's FFL Protection Act sends an unequivocal message to criminals intent on burglarizing and robbing firearm retailers that the safety of America's communities is nonnegotiable," said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel. "This legislation sends a strong message to violent criminals engaging in these illicit activities that there will be accountability and consequences for their crimes. This legislation assigns the responsibility for the crime where it belongs – with the criminal. Senator Graham has been a staunch advocate of holding criminals accountable and protecting firearm retailers. This legislation does both. This legislation is a real solution that will make our communities safer."

The Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) Protection Act builds on the efforts NSSF has taken to address robbery and burglary of firearms through the partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) on [Operation Secure Store®](#), one of several [Real Solutions. Safer Communities.®](#) firearm industry safety initiatives. As part of Operation Secure Store, NSSF matches ATF reward offers for information regarding these crimes that leads to the arrest and conviction of the criminals responsible and the recovery of the stolen firearms. Additionally, NSSF helps raise awareness among firearm retailers to educate them on steps they can take to reduce the chance guns will be stolen from them during a burglary or robbery. In cooperation with ATF, NSSF conducts retailer store security seminars, assists retailers with store security audits of their premises and endorses and promotes the use of security products like smash resistant display cases.

ATF Director Dettelbach [testified](#) before Congress on the Operation Secure Store partnership with NSSF. ATF data has shown Operation Secure Store is working. Firearm retailer burglaries in 2021 were 277, compared to 577 in 2017 and 2,936 firearms were stolen in 2021 from firearm retailers, a 65 percent drop from the 7,841 firearms stolen from retailers in 2017.

## MT FWP's hunting season-setting process begins

**HELENA** – Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks kicked off the biennial hunting season-setting process earlier to allow for more public engagement and greater transparency. Public involvement began in June and end in November. In the past, public involvement happened primarily in December and January.

FWP will conduct scoping meetings around the state through July 15. FWP staff will look to hunters to provide broad input on regulation changes they'd like to see. Staff will also look for feedback on a few specific proposals.

These scoping meetings are more formal than in past years and will replace the public meetings FWP used to hold to present and discuss tentative regulations. However, these scoping meetings are not the same as public comment meetings. FWP staff will listen at the scoping meetings and capture the general themes and then use the information to develop draft regulations, which will be released for public comment in October. FWP will hold additional public meetings in early November to answer questions about the draft regulation proposals. Comment on the draft regulation proposals will be collected through the FWP website during the fall public commenting period. The final decision on regulations will come at the December Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting.

Hunting regulation changes are done every other year. This new process will give the public a better understanding of where regulation changes are coming from, how FWP is engaging the public, and what changes are being suggested by individual commissioners. The earlier start to the process will also result in the availability of hunting regulations at the beginning of the license year – March 1.

### Region 1

- Kalispell, June 29, 6 p.m., FWP Region 1 Office, with a virtual option (490 N. Meridian Rd.)
- Libby, July 6, 6 p.m., KW Maki Theater (724 Louisiana Ave.)

### Region 2

- Lincoln, July 11, 6 p.m., Lincoln Community Hall (404 Main St.)
- Hamilton, July 12, 6 p.m., Bitterroot River Inn (139 Bitterroot Plaza Dr)
- Seeley Lake, July 13, 6 p.m., Seeley Lake Community Foundation (3150 MT-83)

### Region 5

- Big Timber, June 29, 5:30 p.m., Big Timber Carnegie Library (314 McLeod St.)

### Region 6

- Glasgow, June 29, 6 p.m., Cottonwood Inn, with a virtual option (54250 U.S. Hwy 2)

### Region 7

- Miles City, July 6, 6 p.m., FWP Region 7 Office, with a virtual option (352 I-94 Business Loop)
- Glendive, July 11, 6 p.m., Dawson Community College (room to be determined)

## Association supports F&W decision to reject petition

**Washington D.C.** - The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies supports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision to reject a Center for Biological Diversity's petition to undertake a national rulemaking concerning lead ammunition and tackle on the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System).

Considering state fish and wildlife agencies exercise primary statutory authority for management of species within their borders across all types of land, including those within the Refuge System, we greatly appreciate Director Williams' commitment to coordinate closely with AFWA and the States on a workable path forward that considers all available science, relies on broadly tested and utilized state approaches and programs, and supports participation in hunting and angling.

We acknowledge this is an important issue, and we firmly believe that continued expansion of hunting and fishing opportunities on America's lands and waters is essential to our nation's system of conservation and the wellbeing of people, fish, and wildlife. With more people relying on our natural resources for mental and physical health, subsistence harvest, and recreation, increasing the ability of state agencies and their partners to ensure the sustainable management of fish and wildlife and their habitats is more important than ever.

## MI: Western UP moose population ‘unchanged’

In survey results reported to the Michigan Natural Resources Commission in Roscommon today, the moose population estimate for the western Upper Peninsula was not statistically different from the last moose survey conducted in 2019.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has been surveying the western U.P.’s core moose population since 1997, typically every other winter. The 2023 survey marks the first survey completed since 2019 due to scheduling conflicts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The 2023 moose survey estimate was 426\* individuals, which is not statistically different from the 2019 estimate of 509 individuals,” said Tyler Petroelje, northern Michigan wildlife research specialist with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in Marquette. “This continues the trend of plateauing abundance where population growth over the last 12 years is now less than 1%.”

Aerial moose surveys are conducted over core moose habitat areas during winter to identify and tally bulls, cows and calves. This past winter’s survey was conducted by the DNR during portions of January and February.

The western U.P. moose core range covers about 1,400 square miles in parts of Marquette, Baraga, and Iron counties. Moose were translocated there from Canada in two separate efforts in 1985 and 1987.

The remainder of the U.P. is not surveyed for moose but some pockets of higher quality habitat are occupied by lesser numbers of moose, as seen in the eastern U.P. region. Moose have been observed there since the 1950s.

During the 2023 winter survey, researchers tallied 212 individual moose, which was 20% fewer than the 266 moose observed on the 2019 survey. A point estimate indicated a 16% decline in moose abundance.

“Looking at demographic data, with respect to previous surveys, we observed a comparable – but low – cow-to-calf ratio and percentage of calf numbers,” Petroelje said. “A potentially concerning observation is the lesser percentage of twins seen during this survey (9%) compared to the 10-year average of 15%.”

Petroelje said fewer twins, in combination with a lesser bull-to-cow ratio could point to a recruitment issue, which is the number of individuals added to a population over a given time by either births or immigration.

DNR wildlife biologists will continue to monitor recruitment in the population in future surveys to determine whether a trend is developing or if 2023 was a poor calf year.

“Another factor that has affected the moose in the western U.P. is that 2022 was a high year for moose-vehicle crashes,” said John Pepin, DNR deputy public information officer in Marquette. “Collisions involved at least 20 moose last year in the western U.P. We remind motorists to watch for moose, especially when traveling at night.”

With the Moose Hunting Advisory Council’s recommendation to only allow moose hunting if a growth rate of greater than 3% is maintained, the DNR is not recommending implementing a hunting season. The same was true over the past several survey result years.

For more information on moose in Michigan, visit [Michigan.gov/Moose](https://Michigan.gov/Moose).

**Cowboy Wisdom: “All things considered, getting bucked off wasn’t near as bad as hitting the ground.” - Kent Rollins**

© Cowboy Kent Rollins, [www.kentrollins.com](http://www.kentrollins.com), “Comfort Food the Cowboy Way”

## Federal legislation introduced to take kids fishing

**Alexandria, VA** – On June 7, 2023, U.S. Representatives Maria Salazar (R-Fla.) and Sydney Kamlager-Dove (D-Calif.) and Senators Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) introduced the Youth Coastal Fishing Program Act of 2023.

The bill would create a grant program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for projects that take children fishing in the ocean or Great Lakes, with priority given to projects that serve underserved communities. This legislation is in line with the [American Sportfishing Association's](#) (ASA's) goal of introducing new anglers – particularly young people – to recreational fishing.

“Recreational fishing provides substantial physical and mental health benefits, but unfortunately many young people – particularly in underserved communities – face significant barriers in accessing the outdoors,” **said Mike Leonard, the American Sportfishing Association's Vice President of Government Affairs.** “The grants provided through this bill will go a long way to remove those barriers and help children develop a love of fishing. We thank Representatives Salazar and Kamlager-Dove and Senators Wicker and Cantwell for their work on the Youth Coastal Fishing Program Act and are excited about the generations of new anglers it will help create.”

"As someone who knows and recognizes the importance of the marine and aquatic environment, it is critical to provide younger generations of Americans across the country, especially minority Americans, the opportunity to learn firsthand about our seas, oceans, lakes, and outdoors, as well as provide them with the tools to enjoy them," **said Rep. Salazar.**

“Our nation is home to beautiful rivers, oceans, and lakes. As we prepare to commemorate World Oceans Day, I am proud to continue the legacy of the late Congressman Donald McEachin by reintroducing the Youth Coastal Fishing Program Act with Congresswoman Salazar and Senators Wicker and Cantwell to educate our youth on different marine environments, as well as vital conservation measures we must take to combat the climate crisis,” **Kamlager-Dove said.** “It is especially important that historically disadvantaged youth have opportunities to learn about aquatic life and marine sciences to harbor their curiosity in these fields. Ensuring our nation's children have rich, diverse educational experiences allows them to fully embrace their surroundings and thrive as students and individuals.”

“We should be encouraging young Americans to get involved in fishing,” **Wicker said.** “Our legislation will help remove barriers to accessing the outdoors and ensure that more young anglers, especially those in underserved communities, have the opportunity to enjoy this beloved pastime.”

“Fishing is one of our favorite pastimes in the Pacific Northwest, and our bill will support Washington state organizations that take kids fishing in their local coastal waters, rivers, and bays,” **Cantwell said.** “This bill will help more kids get the tools, gear, and support they need to experience the outdoors and the benefits that come with it.”

The bill provides \$2 million in grants over each of the next five years for projects that include a recreational fishing experience for youth, offer education about marine science and conservation and provide information on where or how to fish. While other federal land management agencies, such as the National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service and US Forest Service, have dedicated programs to connect the public to nature, there is no such recreation program within the NOAA Fisheries, which manages federal marine fisheries. A handout on the bill can be found [here](#), bill text can be found [here](#) and a letter of support signed by 21 organizations can be found [here](#). ASA encourages its members to visit our [Keep America Fishing action alert](#) to contact their Members of Congress asking them to support the bill.



Find the Quail and Upland Wildlife  
Federation on Instagram  
@quwfinc  
Updated regularly!

# Notes from the Road:

## Drought patterns have once again shifted to the Midwest

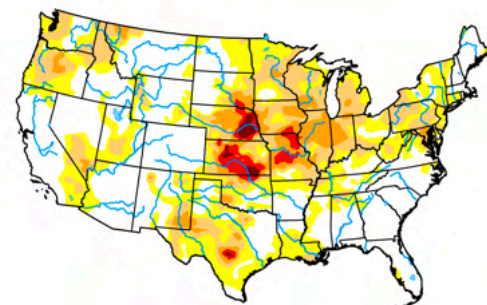
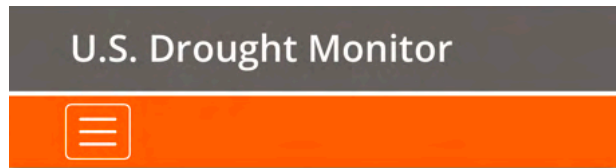


**By Nick Prough** — Many of us have experience drought conditions in during our lifetimes at one time or another, some of us a lot more frequent than others. I have, throughout my career, always followed the weather patterns and weather pattern changes very closely as it always affects everything we do on the landscape, from habitat projects, nesting and brood survival, health, and survival of our wildlife populations — we are managing for and a whole lot more some of which we still don't understand today.

I have lived through extreme flooding conditions as well as extreme drought conditions in the same location even within just a five-year period of time, and I have also lived in a section of the country that normally gets 10" of rain annually that is now at 16" of rain this year, as well as here in Missouri where annually we get 40" of rain and as of typing this article we have at my digital weather station only received 14.5" of rain now half way through the year.

As the associated maps show currently in the recently-released drought monitor map, many of our Missouri and Kansas QUWF habitat projects and landowners just entered (D3) drought category of Extreme Drought levels with some of them in (D4) Exceptional Drought. We have many QUWF landowners who are also ranchers and farmers and have been dealing with drought conditions all over the country for many years, but with this shift of the drought conditions this year shifting from more out west in WY, CO, CA, ID, to now KS, MO, and NE (see recent national drought map) with almost NO extreme or exceptional drought conditions (D3-D4) occurring out west and even very little drought at all and a whole new set of challenges continues to occur on not only our Midwestern farms and ranches but on our wildlife, and their associated habitat projects as well. (Look at the shift on the map from Western to Midwestern three worst drought states it is more than quite drastic).

Here at the cattle ranch that I live on and help manage, as well as many other area QUWF landowner projects, we are now fully into a two-year drought cycle that continues to get worse by the month and even the day. Today the ambient temperature is going to be 102 (yesterday it was 101) and we continue to be blocked by a heat dome from any and all precipitation that tries to move in. Now, before some folks say, "Oh, the western states have survived the drought for many years," one has to think what is normal conditions and how these weather extremes that we have talked about for many years can and will affect nesting, brood rearing, poult survival, food quality and quantity, clean water availability, wildlife diseases such as EHD on deer, and a whole host of other factors we face currently out on the landscape during these "non-normal extreme weather events."



**Map released: Thurs. June 29, 2023**

Data valid: June 27, 2023 at 8 a.m. EDT

### Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

**Continued on Page 29**

## North Dakota waterfowl survey shows wet conditions

**BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA** — Extreme snowfall last winter across central and eastern North Dakota has set up the state for good duck production this spring.

Results from North Dakota Game and Fish Department's annual breeding waterfowl and wetland survey reveal good to excellent conditions for breeding ducks.

"We had a lot of snow last winter and ended up with our 7th-highest wetland index, which is a little bit less than last year (2nd highest ever), but still very, very good," said Mike Szymanski, migratory game bird supervisor for the NDGFD.

The total duck number was estimated just above 3.4 million, a slight increase over the breeding population from 2022. While ducks are up overall, mallards are down 10 percent at 640,000, with blue-winged teal also slightly lower but still a strong 925,000 in the state.

Szymanski reported increases in redheads, canvasbacks, and shovelers over 2022, but the most pleasant surprise is a 40 percent increase in breeding pintails, bringing their breeding populations in North Dakota back to numbers not seen in the state since the 2000s.

While Szymanski said habitat conditions ranged from fair to excellent across North Dakota, heavy rains in key areas in early May should lead to good duck production.

Canada goose numbers declined 27 percent, however they were at an all-time high in 2022. The estimated 297,000 Canada geese represents a strong population, Szymanski said.

Matt Chouinard, waterfowl programs director based at Delta Waterfowl's headquarters in Bismarck, North Dakota, reported that seasonal wetlands—small, shallow ponds in pastures and crop fields that are so important for breeding ducks—were abundant across the central and eastern portions of the state.

"It feels like conditions for nesting ducks are a little better this year," Chouinard said. "I observed a lot of pastures and fields with seasonal ponds, and water outside of the cattail rings in semi-permanent wetlands. That flooded cover helps ducklings avoid predators, and it's where they will go to survive."

Chouinard also noted that Delta's Predator Management trappers are reporting a strong duck nesting effort this spring as they work to increase duck production.

"If we keep getting rains, any ducks that lose a first nest will have a good opportunity to renest this year, and it will also help increase brood survival," Chouinard said.

North Dakota is a leading state for duck production, and a strong breeding season will feed ducks to all four flyways this fall.

The annual North Dakota survey serves as an important first index of breeding duck numbers in the critical prairie pothole region. Conditions are generally good across the PPR, although parts of the Saskatchewan and Alberta prairie are dry.



Continued on Page 13

### Did you know?

**QUWF has four landowner coops: The Grouse Coop and the Niangua Coop in Missouri, and the Catskill Mountains Wildlife and Oregon Joint Wildlife coops.**

**Interested in forming a coop?**

**Email Craig Alderman at [admin@quwf.net](mailto:admin@quwf.net).**

**Continued from Page 12** — Just what kind of fall flight to expect will come into focus in over the next couple of months. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service are completing and compiling data for the 2023 Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey. The results are expected to be released in August. The survey estimated the total duck population at 34.2 million in 2022.

**Delta Waterfowl** is The Duck Hunters Organization, a leading conservation group working to produce ducks and secure the future of waterfowl hunting in North America. Visit [deltawaterfowl.org](http://deltawaterfowl.org).

## Oklahoma: CWD positive deer found in panhandle

A white-tailed deer in the Oklahoma Panhandle has tested positive for chronic wasting disease (CWD).

A Texas County landowner reported the deer to the [Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation](http://oklahoma.gov/odwc/) after witnessing it behaving abnormally. The deer was recovered near Optima and testing was conducted.

This marks the first case of CWD in a wild deer in Oklahoma.

ODWC has activated the next stage of the CWD Response Strategy jointly produced with the [Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry](http://oklahoma.gov/agf/).

“While this is unfortunate news, it is not unexpected since CWD has already been detected in every state that borders Oklahoma. We will be working through our response plan to ensure we can monitor potential spread and keep our state’s deer herd healthy,” said Jerry Shaw, Wildlife Programs Supervisor with ODWC.



OKLAHOMA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**WILDLIFE  
CONSERVATION**

CWD is an always-fatal neurological disease that affects the brains of deer, elk, moose, and other members of the cervid family, creating holes that resemble those in sponges. It’s important to note that CWD transmission from wild animals to people or to livestock has never been documented

The Wildlife Department has conducted CWD monitoring on hunter-harvested deer and elk, and road-killed deer, since 1999. This case marks the first time the disease has been detected in laboratory testing of tissue samples from more than 10,000 wild deer and elk from throughout Oklahoma.

The Wildlife Department will continue monitoring for evidence of this disease within Oklahoma’s borders and will release additional information, including ways deer and elk hunters can help with detection and mitigation, as hunting seasons approach.

Additional guidelines or management plans will be distributed and well-advertised if determined necessary to further protect Oklahoma’s deer and elk populations.

Additional human health information relating to CWD is available at <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nwhc/science/chronic-wasting-disease#publications>.

For more information on the disease, hunting regulations, and proper disposal of infected animals, go to <https://www.wildlifedepartment.com/hunting/resources/deer/cwd>.

## MT: Applications sought for Upland Game Bird Council

**HELENA** – Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks is seeking to fill two vacancies on an advisory council that provides ongoing monitoring of upland game bird enhancement program activities. Council members represent all FWP administrative regions and include upland game bird hunters, chamber of commerce memberships, upland game bird biologists and others who have conservation interests.

For one appointment, the council member must be residing in FWP Region 5. The second council member will be a member of a Chamber of Commerce. Businesses whose clientele include upland game bird hunters or landowners involved with conservation activities that benefit upland game birds are preferred.

Council members will be appointed by FWP Director Dustin Temple to participate in two meetings a year. Members will be asked to contribute to additional discussions throughout a two- or four-year term.

To apply, visit FWP's website at [fwp.mt.gov](http://fwp.mt.gov) and search “Upland Game Bird Advisory Council.” Paper applications are available upon request by calling 406-444-5674. Nominations must be submitted by June 23. The next council meeting will be held in Baker on Sept. 18 and 19.

# MT seeks comments on elk management draft

**HELENA** – Elk hunters interested in how Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks manages elk will get a chance to weigh in on the new draft elk management plan starting today.

The plan will be available on FWP’s website at [fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/public-comment-opportunities/draft-elk-plan](http://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/public-comment-opportunities/draft-elk-plan). The public is invited to comment on the plan; deadline for comments is July 31.

“We’re anxious for public input on this new draft plan, particularly on the hunting district objectives and the suite of management tools we have laid out,” said FWP Director Dustin Temple.

The plan was crafted after expansive public outreach last summer and fall when FWP staff met with the public, landowners, hunters and others at nearly 50 meetings around the state.

With the new draft elk plan, FWP aims to balance habitat capacity, landowner tolerance and elk hunter feedback on their desired hunting experience in crafting population goals for each hunting district. Elk goals look at population numbers, as well as bull-to-cow ratios as a way of meeting this balance.

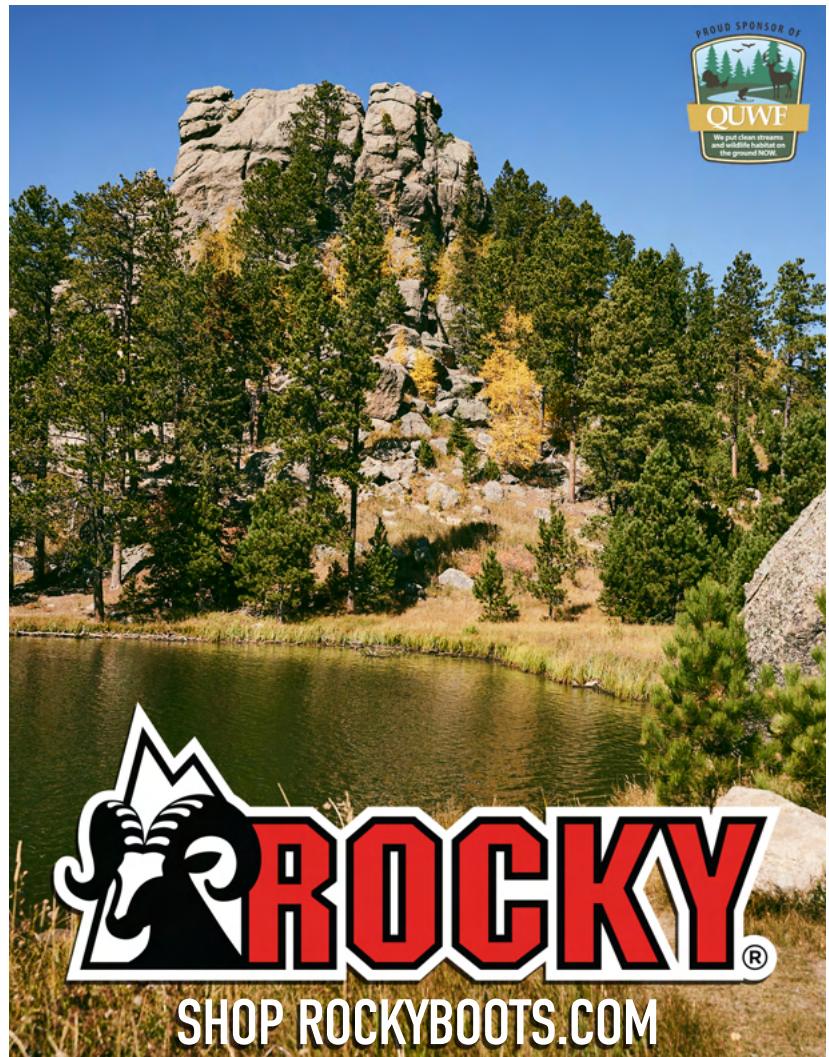
In the past, population sizes have dominated Montana’s elk conversations. This draft plan includes changes to population goals including proposed increases and focuses on populations ranges and other aspects of herd dynamics, like bull-to-cow ratios. Now is the time for stakeholders to let FWP know what they think of this and other details of the draft plan.

“This plan will serve as our guiding document for elk management, and so it’s critical that we hear from hunters, outfitters, landowners and others during this public commenting timeframe,” Temple said.

The plan also lays out a suite of management tools for FWP and the circumstance under which they’d be used depending on population. The idea would be to match elk population status and herd make-up (bull-to-cow ratios) with the prescribed tools to reach goals. For example, hunting districts that have low bull-to-cow ratios, but with populations in objective, might see a leveling out of elk B licenses, but a decrease in either-sex opportunity to increase bull numbers.

To see the draft elk plan, including hunting district specific objectives, please click [here](#). People who would like to comment can do so online at this [link](#).

**FACTOID: Iowa reports nearly 60% of its land is leased, not owned by the people farming it. In 2017 it was 50%. 66% of all farmlands in Iowa are owned by people over 65 years old. In 1982 that was 29%. Source: Iowa Ownership and Tenure Survey**



## Sturm, Ruger & Co. reintroduces Marlin 1894

Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc. (NYSE: RGR) is proud to announce the reintroduction of the Marlin® Model 1894™ Classic chambered in .44 Rem Mag. The Model 1894 Classic retains the traditional characteristics that made this a truly iconic rifle.

“We’re very excited to introduce our first Ruger-made Marlin Model 1894,” said Ruger President and CEO, Chris Killoy. “We have spent many months working to make this rifle the best it can be.”

Chambered in .44 Magnum, the Model 1894 Classic sports a beautifully finished American black walnut straight stock and forend. The clean and crisp checkering accentuates both the aesthetics and utility of this carefully crafted rifle.

Richly blued and featuring a square finger lever, this alloy steel rifle is equipped with a 20” cold hammer-forged barrel with standard six-groove rifling and a 1:20” twist rate. Also capable of shooting the lighter-recoiling .44 Special, the Model 1894 is equipped with a tubular magazine that will accept 10 rounds of .44 Magnum ammunition, or 11 rounds of .44 Special.

“Our focus continues to be on quality,” continued Killoy. “We remain committed to making firearms worthy of John Marlin’s legacy. The fit and finish of this rifle is reminiscent of what was produced by Marlin craftsmen in New Haven, CT many decades ago.”

The Ruger-made 1894 Classic is marked “Mayodan, NC,” bears a “RM” or Ruger-made serial number prefix, and features the red and white “bullseye” in the stock.

Continued on Page 16

## QUWF welcomes All veterans. All the time.

The Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation was formed to focus on and help veteran landowners, veteran sportsmen, and all veterans who are interested in the great outdoors.

QUWF staff will help all veterans find and get benefit assistance through the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) or other resources.

You are **NOT** alone.

Veterans who served our country honorably deserve and have earned the right now to enjoy its freedoms and receive the support and benefits they deserve.

We are the **ONLY VETERAN FORMED** and managed national wildlife and conservation organization in the U.S. QUWF and our chapters support veteran businesses as well. Let us know.



**Continued from Page 15** — Additional models in different calibers and configurations will be released throughout the coming year. Due to the anticipated strong demand and the limited quantity of Ruger-made Marlin lever-action rifles, Ruger encourages retailers to contact their distributors for availability and advises consumers not to leave deposits with retailers that do not have confirmed shipments.

To stay up-to-date on future Marlin announcements and learn more about the Marlin Model 1894 Classic, visit [MarlinFirearms.com](http://MarlinFirearms.com), [Facebook.com/MarlinFirearms](https://Facebook.com/MarlinFirearms) or [Instagram.com/MarlinFirearmsOfficial](https://Instagram.com/MarlinFirearmsOfficial).



The acquisition, ownership, possession and use of firearms is heavily regulated. Some models may not be legally available in your state or locale. Whatever your purpose for lawfully acquiring a firearm – know the law, get trained and shoot safely.

**ABOUT MARLIN FIREARMS**

*Marlin Firearms are manufactured by Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc. - one of the nation's leading manufacturers of rugged, reliable firearms for the commercial sporting market. With products made in America, Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc. offers consumers almost 800 variations of more than 40 product lines, across both the Ruger and Marlin brands. For more than 70 years, Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc. has been a model of corporate and community responsibility. Our motto, "Arms Makers for Responsible Citizens®," echoes our commitment to these principles as we work hard to deliver quality and innovative firearms.*



is a proud sponsor of the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation

Enjoy being on the field.  
 Enjoy being on the range.  
 Protect yourself.  
 Protect your family.  
 Protect your home with  
 American-made Ruger Firearms.



**Ruger.com**

Dedicated to restoring habitats and populations of all upland wildlife species

## NE: Unlimited quota deer, antelope permits available

Hunters may begin purchasing unlimited quota Nebraska deer and antelope permits July 10.

Residents, nonresidents and eligible landowners may purchase permits through the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission starting at 1 p.m. Central time.

Unlimited quota deer permits are resident statewide archery, resident statewide muzzleloader, youth, youth whitetail, nonresident restricted youth, limited landowner and special landowner. Unlimited quota antelope permits are resident statewide archery and youth archery.

### The remaining purchase periods are:

July 11 – Residents may buy any limited quota deer permits.

July 12 – Residents may buy any limited antelope permits.

July 24 – Nonresidents may buy any limited deer permits.

July 25 – Nonresidents may buy any limited antelope permits.

Aug. 7 – Residents and nonresidents may buy any remaining draw unit deer permits.

Aug. 8 – Residents, nonresidents and eligible landowners may buy any remaining draw unit antelope permits.

Aug. 9 – Residents and eligible landowners may buy any remaining draw unit elk permits.

Permits will be available through the close of the hunting season or until the quota sells out.

Purchases may be made online at [OutdoorNebraska.gov](https://OutdoorNebraska.gov), in person at a Game and Parks office, or via mail: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, 2200 N. 33rd St., Lincoln, NE, 68503.

For more information on big game hunting and permits, see the 2023 Nebraska Big Game Guide at [OutdoorNebraska.gov](https://OutdoorNebraska.gov).

QUALITY GEAR  
**TRIED & TRUE**  
A LIFETIME OF RESEARCH BY A FAMILY OF HUNTERS

ALPSOUTDOORZ.COM

**YOUR HUNT  
DEPENDS ON  
GREAT GEAR**

PACKS | FURNITURE | HUNTING BLINDS

**ALPS OUTDOORZ**  
EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS.

# ALPS BRANDS®

EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS.

## *Featured products of the month*



ALPS OutdoorZ  
Cast-N-Blast  
Product No.8490911



ALPS OutdoorZ  
Enforcer  
Product No. 8419910



ALPS Mountaineering  
Solitude 24  
Product No. 6062072



ALPS Mountaineering  
Acropolis 4-Person  
Product No. 5422350



Browning Camping  
Denali -30  
Product No. 4897911



ALPS Mountaineering  
Wavelength Blanket  
Product No. 4990264

*Review all products online at [www.alpsbrands.com](http://www.alpsbrands.com)*

## NSSF condemns proposed rule to ban traditional ammo

WASHINGTON, D.C. — NSSF®, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, condemns the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) **Proposed Rule** that would ban the use of traditional lead ammunition on 48 new distinct hunting opportunities across approximately 3,000 acres of National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs). This is another illustration of the Biden administration's Department of the Interior (DOI) and USFWS kowtowing to anti-hunting activists by promulgating policies that lack sound scientific data.

"This is the latest example of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service creating rules that punish hunters, threaten conservation funding and advance special interests without sound scientific evidence that traditional lead ammunition cause is causing detrimental wildlife population impacts," said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel. "This administration is ignoring its promise to 'follow the science.' In fact, it is ignoring the need for scientific evidence in order to advance an antigun and anti-hunting agenda. The need for Congress to pass the Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act has never been more urgent."

The USFWS **announced** three national wildlife refuges are proposing to expand opportunities for hunting. These refuges are Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge in Alabama, Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge in Florida and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Minnesota. The proposed rule, appearing in the **Federal Register**, includes proposals to phase out lead ammunition at eight national wildlife refuges. USFWS claims to follow the best available science yet offers no peer-reviewed site-specific scientific data to demonstrate traditional ammunition is causing detrimental wildlife population impacts.

NSSF urges Congress to quickly pass U.S. Rep. Robert Wittman's Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act, **H.R. 615**, which would ensure America's number one resource of conservation funding remains in place and that hunters, recreational shooters and anglers throughout the nation can continue to enjoy America's sporting heritage. Excise taxes paid by firearm and ammunition manufacturers have contributed over **\$16 billion since 1937, or \$25 billion when adjusted for inflation**, for wildlife and habitat conservation. It is the leading funding source for wildlife restoration. Over \$1.6 billion was apportioned to the states for wildlife conservation projects last year, with **\$1.19 billion** of that sourced to excise taxes paid by firearm and ammunition manufacturers. The bill passed the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee on a bipartisan vote earlier this week.

Rep. Wittman's legislation, along with U.S. Sen. Steve Daines' (R-Mont.) companion legislation **S. 1185** of the same name, would require the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to provide site-specific peer-reviewed scientific data in cooperation with state agencies that demonstrates traditional lead ammunition or fishing tackle is causing detrimental wildlife population impacts before prohibiting their use by hunters and anglers.

The **Final Rule** published last year to similarly ban traditional ammunition and fishing tackle while opening hunting and fishing opportunities was part of "sue and settle" litigation between the Center for Biological Diversity and the USFWS and was implemented without scientific evidence or consultation of state agencies.

Requiring the use of **alternative ammunition** would put a significant cost barrier to participation in hunting and fishing on lands. Alternative ammunition is, on average, 25 percent more expensive than traditional lead ammunition and less available. That barrier would "price out" many hunters and anglers and decrease the **excise tax funding** paid by firearm and ammunition manufacturers they support.

NSSF urges all outdoorsmen and women to provide comments on the **Proposed Rule** voicing their concerns that this threat to conservation funding lacks any sound scientific data and only harms participation in hunting and fishing on public lands.



**Cowboy Wisdom: "Manners don't cost a thing, but the impression of rudeness can be very costly." - Kent Rollins**

© Cowboy Kent Rollins, [www.kentrollins.com](http://www.kentrollins.com), "Comfort Food the Cowboy Way"

# MT: License donor program benefits disabled vets

**Editor’s Note: As a Disabled American Veteran, we appreciate all efforts to support veterans. However, we also feel using the disability medical care rating does a complete injustice to those who served with distinction, dedication and honor to this county regardless of the disability, in this case arbitrarily chosen as 70%. Those at 69% to zero deserve the same consideration, they already earned it.**

**HELENA** – Hunters who will not be able to use their license this season have the opportunity to donate that license. Residents and nonresidents can donate their hunting license to a disabled military veteran or disabled active-duty service member who is working with an organization that uses hunting as part of the rehabilitation process.

The license donor program began in 2013, and each year between 40 and 60 hunters donate their license. Reasons vary, but according to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks licensing staff, many hunters donate licenses because of medical or family emergencies, work commitments or issues with outfitters or reservations.

The recipients are disabled veterans who were awarded a purple heart and have a 70 percent or higher disability rating. They must be sponsored by a nonprofit organization that provides hunting as a rehabilitation service to disabled veterans in Montana.

To participate in the program, hunters, potential recipients and nonprofit organizations must complete a form. Forms are available on FWP’s [Hunting Licenses & Permits webpage](#) under “Donate License Programs” and can be returned to either an FWP regional office or by mail to FWP’s Licensing Bureau, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620. For more information, contact the FWP licensing office at 406-444-2950.

**Cowboy Wisdom: “Don’t let your yearnings get ahead of your earnings.” - Kent Rollins**

© Cowboy Kent Rollins, [www.kentrollins.com](http://www.kentrollins.com), “Comfort Food the Cowboy Way”

*Take a short break – You have earned it!*

*Looking for a weekend away or meeting location in Missouri?*

*Contact Samie LaForce,  
Missouri Caesars  
Entertainment, at  
(816) 889-7365.*

at **Harrah's**  
**LAS VEGAS**

*Proud sponsor of*



*Call for reservations today – (702) 693-6111*

## QUWF preliminary nest predator data promising

**Buffalo, MO** — The populations of turkey and quail are affected by many environmental challenges. Extreme weather, quality habitat loss and by two types of predations; normal adult predation and that of nest predation. Nesting survival of ground nesting birds such as turkeys and quail is a critical focus across many parts of the country. It is a known fact; predators can negatively impact nesting survival across the landscape. How much so we are yet to totally measure but this preliminary data of a three-year study by QUWF is showing a dramatic improvement swing where nest predation is being focused on.

Even some biologists may themselves treat predation with blinders on at times, thinking it's a natural condition that occurs. Unfortunately, when the balance is totally out of whack, science shows a different approach may be needed. Furthermore, predation control is not the total ultimate answer, it is just one of the tools in a land managers toolbox that can and should be used when needed and should no longer be ignored.

"We began setting up our QUWF study farms to trap nest predators where turkey nesting had been literally wiped-out last year," explains Nick Prough, chief wildlife biologist and project manager of the nest predation research project. "With one set of private landowners we set up a one mile by one mile study area consisting of 640 acres with several adjoining landowners we had walked with to see the total predation of many turkey nests in the past and subsequent low poult counts with decreasing turkey numbers over the past years. These landowners have consistently completed intense habitat work over the past decade but something else seemed to be missing in the puzzle.

"We set up a trapping regiment wherein every 10-acre tract was to be trapped over the extended new trapping period that the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) had passed into the regulations to address these types of situations occurring across the landscapes. The traps were checked every day during the extended trapping seasons and during the regular trapping seasons.

"During that time period on this particular study site, we trapped 130 nest predators (67% raccoons, 32% possums, 1% other) from the landscape."

Several other satellite study farms in other counties in this study are also reporting high nest predator trapping results and increased positive nesting survival so far this year for turkey broods.

"This spring we filmed the earliest wild turkey brood discovery I have ever witnessed with 8 poults in the group accompanying the hen that were only two days old," Prough said. "They were utilizing some of the recently created brood habitat created just for this purpose coinciding with the additional increased trapping efforts. We also observed seven other nesting hens which we did not disturb, that appear to be on track to producing quality broods as well on this farm. We do have video of the very young poults that were observed in the brood habitat which is great to share with other landowners working on the same increased efforts."

The landowner was ecstatic. "QUWF has helped me preserve my turkey population as well as future turkey hunting opportunities for my children and grandchildren and we will continue to increase our habitat and improve nesting survival on our farms for many years to come," they said.

The QUWF Nest Predator Study will continue for another two years to gather further accurate results and data over all of the participating farms.

## Oregon: Salmon and steelhead snagging problems

**SALEM, Ore.** — OSP F and W Troopers discovered fish with embedded hooks, sliced fins, circular scabs, and other evidence of illegal tactics, while assisting ODFW hatchery staff during the salmon spawning season.

Snagging occurs when a person hooks, or attempts to hook, a fish anywhere on its body other than inside the mouth. Although snagging is an unlawful practice with steep consequences, many people still engage in this unethical behavior, according to OSP F and W Trooper Cameron Jamison.

"Indicators that a person may be attempting to snag fish include quickly and repeatedly ripping large lengths of line through the water, repeated yanking of the fishing rod from water lever to over the shoulders or head and failing to release fish which have been hooked anywhere on their fins or body," Trooper Cameron said.

Evidence of snagging and other injuries becomes apparent during annual collection processes, when hatchery workers collect and sort salmon and steelhead for spawning.

Continued on Page 22

**Continued from Page 21** — During the collection process, hatchery staff, with assistance from OSP F and W Troopers, check for tags that indicate when and where each fish was released as a smolt, along with other tracking information. The data from these collections is used to determine the health of the fish populations and to assist in determining future rules and regulations.

Salmon and Steelhead then go into holding ponds until the hatchery accumulates the number of fish necessary to repopulate that hatchery and river system. When hatchery workers reach a target number of salmon and steelhead, they contain the fish in holding ponds for spawning.

Steelhead in good condition after spawning are released back into the lower sections of the same river in hopes that they will head back out to the ocean and have another opportunity to return to the hatchery next year to spawn again. Salmon and steelhead at the end of their lifecycles are placed in streams to decompose as part of the stream enrichment program.

By the time salmon and steelhead return to the hatchery they've typically reached the end of their lifecycle. Seventy percent of salmon and steelhead harvested in Oregon originate from a hatchery, and ninety five percent of the salmon and steelhead harvested in the Willamette River originate from a hatchery. In 2022, hatcheries estimated returns of about 142,000 salmon and 27,000 steelhead.

**The Stop Poaching Campaign educates the public on how to recognize and report poaching. This campaign is a collaboration among state agencies, sportsmen and other conservationists, landowners, and recreationists to engage the public in combatting Oregon's poaching problem. Our goal is to: Incentivize reporting on wildlife crimes through the TIP Line; Strengthen enforcement by increasing the number of OSP Fish and Wildlife Troopers; and Support prosecution in becoming an effective deterrent. The campaign helps to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitat for the enjoyment of present and future generations. Contact campaign coordinator Yvonne Shaw for more information. [Yvonne.L.Shaw@odfw.oregon.gov](mailto:Yvonne.L.Shaw@odfw.oregon.gov).**

If you observe behavior that you believe to be snagging, please contact Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife at \*OSP (\*677) or the Turn-In-Poachers (TIP) Line at: (800) 452-7888."



**Cowboy Code: "Take care of your livestock and family before yourself."  
- Kent Rollins**

© Cowboy Kent Rollins, [www.kentrollins.com](http://www.kentrollins.com), "Comfort Food the Cowboy Way"

Proud Sponsor of QUWF

## Quality Habitat Begins With Truax!

- ♦ Farm Programs – CRP, CREP, Farmable Wetlands, Grassland Reserves, Source Water Protection
- ♦ Roadside Seeding
- ♦ Range & Pasture Enhancements

**Our Secret: Proper Seed Placement and Seed-to Soil Contact**

Till and No-Till Drills and Broadcasters 4' to 15' Planting Widths	
<b>Double Disc/No-Till Drills:</b>	<b>Broadcast Spreaders:</b>
FLXII Series Grass & Grain Drills	Trillion Seeder
Utility Drills	Pull-type Broadcaster
	Handheld and ATV Seed Slinger

**QUWF Members Buy Direct From Truax & Save \$\$\$**

**truax** COMPANY, INC.  
4300 Quebec Ave. North  
New Hope, MN 55428

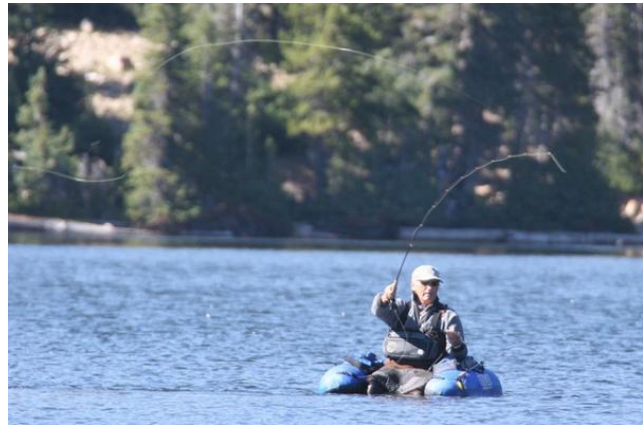
Check out our full lineup by calling 763•537•6639 or visit [www.truaxcomp.com](http://www.truaxcomp.com)

## Utah: Good news, bad news on water levels

After a winter of record-breaking snowfall, it's no surprise that we're seeing higher than normal flows at waters throughout the state. After years of ongoing drought, it's great to see water levels rising at our reservoirs and lakes.

Utahns are used to seeing our snowpack vary from year to year. These variations lead to fluctuations in water levels in our reservoirs, lakes, rivers and streams, which in turn impact the quality of fishing. Here's a summary of how we anticipate water levels — both high and low — impact fishing in Utah in the coming months and beyond.

This year's high water may mean slower fishing in lakes and reservoirs



Reservoir and lake water levels are higher this year than in past years, and this increased volume provides fish with more water to occupy. And, it provides more habitat for prey foods that fish rely on, like zooplankton and insects.

As a result of the current conditions, our prediction is that at some waterbodies fishing may be slower this year than in past years. That is because higher water levels allow fish to disperse more, making them more difficult for anglers to locate. Also, lots of natural prey and an abundance of other food sources may mean that fish bellies will be more full this year, making fish less inclined to take bait and lures.

But high water now means great fishing in the future at our lakes and reservoirs

Two anglers holding kokanee salmon caught at Flaming Gorge

There is a silver lining to this. The high water levels provide conditions that are prime for fish growth. This is because the high water levels provide more habitat for various fish prey items such as zooplankton and insects to grow. Also, the high flows bring in nutrients that help these prey items flourish.

This means that anglers should see larger fish, probably starting next year.

Also, conditions are great for high survival of fish populations. In addition to bumping up the availability of food sources, high water generally provides fish with more habitat. For example, higher water levels submerge brush that has grown along shorelines during drought years. For species like yellow perch, crappie, bluegill and bass, this submerged brush provides great spawning habitat and cover for newly hatched fish. Also, the sunken vegetation adds nutrients to the water as it decomposes, in turn increasing the production of zooplankton and invertebrates — favored food sources for many species of fish.

As a result of these conditions, we expect strong growth of many fish species in the years to come. Anglers may expect to see larger numbers of trout starting next year, and more yellow perch, crappie, bluegill and bass in two to four years. Also, the fish that anglers see should be a little larger than in recent years.



## Utah: Wildlife board votes to prohibit swan harvest

**SALT LAKE CITY** — The Utah Wildlife Board approved some changes to upland game hunting and waterfowl hunting — including making it illegal to harvest trumpeter swans — as well as changes to a few other items during a public meeting Thursday.

### Changes to waterfowl and swan hunting

In 2019, swan regulations changed to expand the hunting boundaries in Box Elder County and to increase the total number of swan permits offered in Utah to allow for additional hunting opportunities. Since that change, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources has had [to close the swan hunting season early for the last four years](#), due to the federal quota of 20 trumpeter swans being met.

Utah is one of only nine states in the U.S. that allows hunting for swans. Due to the low population size of trumpeter swans in the Greater Yellowstone area, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sets the annual harvest quota (currently 20 birds) for the number of trumpeter swans that can be harvested in Utah.

In an effort to prevent the swan hunting season from having to close early, the Utah Wildlife Board voted to prohibit the harvest of trumpeter swans in Utah. Only tundra swan hunting permits will be issued to hunters, and it will be illegal to harvest a trumpeter swan. Hunters will still be required to check in any harvested swans at a DWR office. Trumpeter swans will be seized, and the hunter may face a citation.

[In December 2021, the Utah Wildlife Board voted](#) to mandate a waiting period for anyone who harvests a trumpeter swan. The waiting period prevents hunters from obtaining another swan permit in Utah for five years, for adults, and for three years, for youth. That waiting period is still in effect, in addition to the new rule approved Thursday.

“We have seen a higher number of trumpeter swans harvested the last four years because there are more migrating through Utah than in previous years,” Utah Division of Wildlife Resources Migratory Game Bird Program Coordinator Jason Jones said. “We are hopeful that this change will prevent hunting opportunities from being taken away due to the early-season closures.”

## NSSF reminds recreational shooters to help prevent wildfires

NSSF®, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, reminds outdoor recreationists, including target shooters and hunters, to take precautions so they don't accidentally ignite a wildfire.

NSSF's “[Help Prevent Wildfires](#)” public service announcements campaign provides [video](#) and [audio](#) PSAs, an 8.5 x 11 [poster](#), an [infographic](#) and shareable social media posts that remind recreational shooters and other outdoor enthusiasts to be mindful of their surroundings and to take precautions, such as:

- Being aware of official restrictions on shooting and other activities in fire-prone areas
- Not using tracer rounds, exploding targets or ammunition that is steel-jacketed or contains steel-core components
- Knowing that a vehicle's hot exhaust systems can ignite dry vegetation
- Making sure all campfires and smoking materials are properly extinguished

There were 68,988 wildfires in 2022 that burned more than 7.5 million acres of land throughout the country, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. These fires—an increase from 2021 of more than 10,000 conflagrations and more than 400,000 acres consumed—caused billions of dollars in damage plus hardship for both people and wildlife. Wildfires are tragic in many ways, including that in most cases they can be prevented when people pay attention to their surroundings and follow safe practices. Some 90 percent of wildland fires in the United States are caused by human actions.



Continued on Page 25

**Continued from Page 24** — “After seeing the awful destruction and heartbreak wildfires can cause, no one would want to accidentally be the cause of one,” said Joe Bartozzi, NSSF President and CEO. “As gun owners, we care about safeguarding our communities and our natural resources, and so we remind everyone to check the fire-danger levels in their area and take precautions before heading outdoors to pursue our warm-weather activities, including recreational shooting.”

NSSF encourages individuals and organizations to share the “**Help Prevent Wildfires**” public service announcements and infographic on their social media networks and to use the **#GunOwnersCare** hashtag.

## Road-killed deer in Florida Panhandle positive for CWD

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will be increasing chronic wasting disease (CWD) sampling surveillance efforts in southeast Alabama after the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) announced the confirmation of a positive CWD test sample from a road-killed deer in Holmes County, Florida.

Due to the detection of CWD in Holmes County, Florida, ADCNR’s Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries (WFF) Division will deploy additional self-service, drop-off CWD sampling freezer locations throughout southeast Alabama and increase CWD surveillance efforts, as outlined in Alabama’s CWD Surveillance and Response Plan. For more information about CWD sampling and a map of self-service, drop-off CWD sampling locations statewide, visit [www.outdooralabama.com/cwd/cwd-sampling](http://www.outdooralabama.com/cwd/cwd-sampling).

Alabama’s first case of CWD was detected in Lauderdale County in northwest Alabama in January 2022. Since 2022, there have been only three cases of CWD detected in Lauderdale County. To date, the disease has not been detected in any other Alabama county.

Hunters are ADCNR’s most important partner in the management of CWD. Samples voluntarily submitted by hunters during deer season assist ADCNR with statewide CWD surveillance. ADCNR will also continue to partner with the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (ADAI) on statewide CWD monitoring. ADAI’s assistance with testing samples allows ADCNR to better serve the public and provide timely information on the distribution and extent of CWD in Alabama.

Among deer, CWD is a progressive, fatal disease that commonly results in altered behavior due to microscopic changes in the brain of affected animals. An animal may carry the disease for years without outward indication. In latter stages of the disease, signs may include listlessness, lowering of the head, weight loss, repetitive walking in set patterns and a lack of responsiveness.

During deer season, hunters throughout the state are encouraged to provide deer heads for CWD sampling. The public is also encouraged to report roadkill deer and deer displaying unusual behavior to their local WFF District Office. Contact information is available at [www.outdooralabama.com](http://www.outdooralabama.com).

It is important that the public be familiar with Alabama’s CWD regulation and the CWD regulations in other states. To review Alabama’s regulation and the latest information about CWD in the state, visit [www.outdooralabama.com/cwd-info](http://www.outdooralabama.com/cwd-info).

ADCNR promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama’s natural resources through four divisions: Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries. Learn more at [www.outdooralabama.com](http://www.outdooralabama.com).

## NC: New license, vessel registration launches July 1

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission will launch its new license and vessel registration system, **Go Outdoors North Carolina**, on July 1. This enhanced system will improve both the user and customer service experience. Before the transition to the new system, ALVIN, the current system will be unavailable starting Tuesday, June 27 after 5:00 p.m. through 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 1.

**If you need to purchase a license or register or renew your vessel registration during this time you are encouraged to do so before June 27.**

## AZGFD cautions boaters, anglers during monsoon

**Editor's Note: Summer flash flooding can be exceptionally dangerous. Many camp out on-stream or river edges and on sand bars. Rising flash flood waters can literally wash away campers, vehicles and anything else in their path in a matter of minutes. It happens every year here in the mid-west when tubers and kayakers camp on the rivers. When riding a UTV or ATV, DO NOT cross swollen and swift streams. The force of the water far exceeds the vehicles ability to maintain any type of traction.**

**PHOENIX** — Monsoon weather is just around the corner, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) cautions boaters, anglers and off-highway vehicle (OHV) users that weather conditions can quickly change and become dangerous for those who aren't prepared.

The severity of monsoon storms varies greatly, from a minor dust storm to a violent thunderstorm capable of producing hail, deadly lightning and flash flooding.

“Arizona is known for its often unbearable summer heat; it's also known for great places to get outdoors, whether that's on an OHV in the high country or one of our many lakes or rivers,” said Josh Hoffman, boating safety education coordinator.

“However, it's important that people keep the day's weather in mind. If severe weather is likely, or storms are starting to build up around you, it's a good time to safely get off the water or trails and head indoors.”

Paddlers, whether in a kayak, canoe, or on a SUP, should pay extra close attention to the weather, as they can be more vulnerable to dangerous monsoon weather. AZGFD offers the following advice to protect those recreating during a monsoon:

### **When on a boat, personal watercraft or paddleboard:**

- While life jackets are legally required for anyone under 12, everyone should wear a life jacket at all times while on the water. Storms can create large waves that could knock a passenger from the boat. A life jacket does you no good if it's stowed when you're thrown.
- Monitor the weather and use a weather radio or a weather app for updates from the National Weather Service. If storms are predicted, or are building, pull the boat out of the water or consider postponing the outing.
- Secure all gear above and below decks. If you are on a paddlecraft, rig for a flip.
- Keep everyone aboard away from electrical and ungrounded components, and remain as low in the boat as possible.
- If there is lightning, disconnect all electrical equipment. Stay clear of metal objects as much as possible.
- Slow down, but keep enough power to maintain headway and steering.
- Turn on navigation lights.
- If possible, head for the nearest shore that is safe to approach. It might be best to ride out the storm in open water rather than try to approach the shore in heavy wind and waves. But never try to ride out a storm in a paddlecraft.
- Boats should head the bow into waves at a 45-degree angle. Personal watercraft should head directly into the waves.

For more information on boating in Arizona, visit [www.azgfd.com/Boating/](http://www.azgfd.com/Boating/).

### **When on a shoreline or riding an OHV:**

- Always wear proper safety gear, including a helmet, eye protection, long sleeves, pants, over-the-ankle boots and gloves.
- Seek shelter indoors if storms are developing or are nearby.
- Never cross running water. While it can look shallow, it might be deep enough that it could push the vehicle downstream or get it stuck in loose sediment.
- Drive slowly to not lose control on muddied trails.
- To avoid being struck by lightning, avoid open fields, high ground, trees, poles or other tall objects, and standing bodies of water.
- Be aware of, and avoid, flash flood zones.

For more information on riding an OHV in Arizona, visit [www.azgfd.com/OHV/](http://www.azgfd.com/OHV/).

## Congress: Save the boaters, save the whales

**Editor's Note: Research is also indicating the East coast off shore wind mills may be interfering with the migration of the whales and dolphins, possibly from hyper sonic emissions of the windmills as well as physical structures.**

Following the House Natural Resources subcommittee hearing about NOAA's proposed vessel speed restrictions along the Atlantic Seaboard, Senators Joe Manchin and John Boozman introduced the bipartisan Protecting Whales, Human Safety and the Economy Act of 2023.

Manchin (D-W.V.) and Boozman (R-Ark.) are co-chairs of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus and members of the Congressional Boating Caucus.

The bill would prohibit NOAA from issuing a rule that modifies or replaces the existing North Atlantic right whale vessel-strike reduction regulation until technological solutions recently authorized by Congress can better track whales. NOAA has proposed changes that would broaden the boundaries and timing of seasonal restrictions that reduce speeds to 10 knots along much of the East Coast.



"I know firsthand how important our fishing culture is to who we are, whether that's on our trout streams in West Virginia or coastal fishing along the Eastern Seaboard," Manchin **said in a statement**. "I'm proud to introduce the bipartisan Protecting Whales, Human Safety and the Economy Act of 2023 to prevent yet another example of dangerous federal overreach that would place unnecessary burdens on our seasonal fishermen, boat manufacturers and the coastal economies that rely on them."

Added Boozman: "We can and should balance protecting wildlife and livelihoods because it is common sense. I'm pleased to join Sen. Manchin on this legislation to encourage a reasonable solution for safeguarding the right whale population without imposing overly restrictive mandates and inviting unintended consequences."

## Nebraska: 2024 mountain lion season approved

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission approved staff recommendations for a 2024 mountain lion hunting season at its June 9 meeting in Alma.

For the first time, a mountain lion harvest season will take place outside the Pine Ridge as the Niobrara Unit is created, encompassing parts of Brown, Cherry, Keya Paha, Rock and Sheridan counties. The objective for the Niobrara Unit is to provide a harvest opportunity for mountain lions that allows the population to remain resilient and healthy, while slowing growth of the population.

Mountain lions in Nebraska are part of the larger western population that includes Colorado, South Dakota and Wyoming, and are not isolated.

Mountain lion presence has been documented in the Niobrara River Valley of north-central Nebraska since 2001. There has been a resident reproducing population there since 2013 and information gathered through research suggests a population that is growing and will be resilient to harvest.

Season 1 in the Niobrara and Pine Ridge units will take place Jan. 2 through the end of February. The season will end immediately in a unit if the annual harvest limit or female sub-limit are reached. The Pine Ridge limit will be four mountain lions with a sub-limit of two females, and the Niobrara limit will be two mountain lions with a one female sub-limit.

Up to 320 permits will be issued by lottery in the Pine Ridge Unit and up to 160 permits will be issued in the Niobrara Unit. An auxiliary season would be held March 16 through the end of March if the annual harvest limit or female sub-limit are not reached during Season 1 in a unit.

## VT muzzleloader antlerless deer permit apps available

**MONTPELIER, Vt.** — The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department reminds hunters that muzzleloader season [antlerless deer permit applications](#) are available its website and from license agents. A link to the information and online applications is on the home page.

Hunting for antlerless deer will be allowed statewide during the archery season. One deer of either sex will be allowed during the October 21-22 youth and novice weekend hunt.

The muzzleloader seasons on October 26-29 and December 2-10 will have antlerless permits available for 19 of Vermont's 21 Wildlife Management Units.



Landowners who post their land may not apply for a landowner priority muzzleloader antlerless deer permit. They are eligible to apply in the regular lottery for an antlerless deer permit.

“Recent management efforts have successfully balanced deer numbers with what the habitat can support in many parts of Vermont,” said Nick Fortin, deer and moose project leader for the Fish and Wildlife Department. “As a result, the goal is now to maintain current deer numbers in most of the state.”

Deer populations in eight wildlife management units, primarily in the Champlain Valley, remain above their respective population objectives. The goal is to reduce deer numbers in those areas.”

The deadline to apply for a muzzleloader antlerless deer permit is August 2. The lottery drawing for permits is scheduled for September 14.

## FWC, FDACS, partner agencies to publicly discuss CWD

Following confirmation of a positive test for [chronic wasting disease \(CWD\)](#) in a white-tailed deer in Holmes County, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) have scheduled a public meeting in Bonifay. The meeting will provide information about chronic wasting disease and an opportunity for area residents to ask questions about CWD and CWD management strategies. Details for the public meeting are as follows:

**Thursday, July 6** — 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (CDT), Bonifay K-8 School Auditorium, 140 Blue Devil Drive Bonifay, FL 32425

The FWC and its agency partners take CWD very seriously and have implemented a comprehensive response plan. As part of the plan, the FWC will collect samples from specific established zones to further assess any spread of the disease. The results from this initial sampling effort will inform resource managers so they can respond with appropriate management strategies.

The FWC has increased CWD monitoring and surveillance in the area and FDACS is prioritizing CWD testing from all samples collected from the tri-county area.

The FWC is asking anyone who sees a sick, abnormally thin deer or finds a deer dead from unknown causes to call the CWD hotline, **866-CWD-WATCH (866-293-9282)** and report the animal's location.

For more information, visit [MyFWC.com/CWD](http://MyFWC.com/CWD).

**Cowboy Code: “Be humble and respectful of others.” - Kent Rollins**

© Cowboy Kent Rollins, [www.kentrollins.com](http://www.kentrollins.com), “Comfort Food the Cowboy Way”

**Continued from Page 11** — Yes, many cattle ranchers are now selling cows to reduce herd numbers with a lack of available grass going further into summer and non-existent affordable hay to cut or buy, farmers are watching crop fields stall out or burn up in worsening drought and wildlife land managers and landowners are watching similar conditions effect recent Native Warm Season Grass (NWSG) plantings struggle to grow or outcompete weeds, timber stands stress and early leaf loss, once lush green food plots burn up and wilt away, ponds and water holes run dry, all on these same and adjoining farms that ranchers and farmers are fighting the drought on.

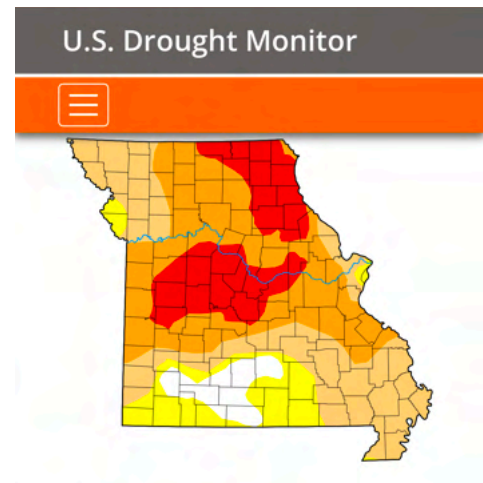
These drought conditions can and will affect almost every one of your management decisions you make on the landscape from future fire line management for upcoming NWSG summer/fall burns, to future plantings, timber stand management decisions, CRP field management, invasive species management and many others.

So, if you are in one of these drought stricken areas currently, I am looking towards the skies each and every day with you, and if you are not currently in a drought area on the map, just wait a year or two and plan ahead as this shift could be headed your way or back your way some time very soon.

Keep up all the great work out there that each of you, your landowners, your chapters and conservation partners are doing on crucial wildlife habitat projects, youth field day events, as well as all your other conservation outreach efforts, you are working on in your local communities each and every day, as you are definitely ...

**“Making a Difference for Wildlife, One Acre at a Time!”**

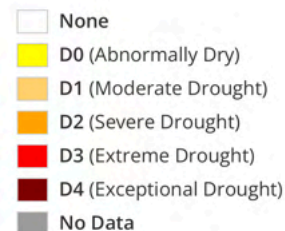
*Nick Prough is the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation chief wildlife biologist.*



**Map released: Thurs. June 29, 2023**

Data valid: June 27, 2023 at 8 a.m. EDT

#### Intensity



## Special notice to our QUWF veteran farmers and ranchers

**Has your farm suffered from any of these disasters in 2020 and/or 2021?**

- Severe storms and flooding
- Excessive moisture
- Severe winter storms
- Drought and excessive heat
- Derecho
- Landslides and mudslides
- Tornadoes

The USDA Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase 2 covers losses to crops, trees, bushes, and vines due to a qualifying natural disaster event in calendar years 2020 and 2021. Phase 2 intends to fill additional assistance gaps and cover eligible producers who did not participate in existing risk management programs.

Even if you haven't suffered from any of these specific disasters, you may still be eligible to apply for ERP 2. You can email us at [kate@farmvetco.org](mailto:kate@farmvetco.org) or call our support number at 855-FVC-FARM (855-382-3276).

We can help you determine if you are an eligible producer, have eligible commodities, and figure out what your benchmark years are.

To access the Technical Assistance request form, use the link below:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/7406aa0a48194dc2a302a64bb1036eb9>

To learn more about the claim process, please visit the link below use this link:

<https://flowerhill.institute/usda-fsa>

**DO NOT DELAY, CLAIMS MUST BE FILED BY JULY 14, 2023.**

# Fires in Canada

Quebec is battling more than 160 forest fires during what federal officials say is shaping up to be among Canada's worst fire seasons ever.

With more than 480 wilderness firefighters on the ground, Quebec can fight around 30 fires, according to the Quebec Premier, adding that normally firefighters would come from other provinces to help.

Last Friday there were 324 fires burning across Canada. As of Monday morning that had grown to 413.



**Craig A. Alderman**, executive director  
[admin@quwf.net](mailto:admin@quwf.net)

**Nick Prough**, chief wildlife biologist and  
wildlife partnership coordinator  
[chiefbiologist@quwf.net](mailto:chiefbiologist@quwf.net)

**Betty Richardson**, seed program manager  
[habitatseedmngn@quwf.net](mailto:habitatseedmngn@quwf.net)

**JD Kennedy**, social media and research  
coordinator intern

**Laura Hazelett**, American Falconry  
Conservancy president

**Advertising and circulation**  
[admin@quwf.net](mailto:admin@quwf.net)

**Membership**  
[membership@quwf.net](mailto:membership@quwf.net)

**Website Design**  
Wehrenberg Design Company, Springfield, MO

**QUWF Email**  
Information Systems, Springfield, MO

**Select Photography**  
Mountain Girl Photography, Cody, WY

## THE HABITAT GUIDE

Quail and Upland  
Wildlife Federation  
PO Box 947  
Buffalo, MO 65622  
417-345-5960  
[www.quwf.net](http://www.quwf.net)  
"It's all about Wildlife"  
National Staff

The Habitat Guide accepts  
story suggestions from  
readers. Some story  
information appears as  
gathered from interviewees.  
The Habitat Guide assumes  
no responsibility for the  
credibility of statements  
made by interviewees.

© Copyright Quail and  
Upland Wildlife Federation,  
Inc., 2023. All rights  
reserved.