

# 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

## Nonresident Nebraska turkey permits sold out

No more 2024 Nebraska spring turkey hunting permits are available to nonresidents.

The quota of 10,000 permits has sold out, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Permits were available for purchase by nonresidents beginning Jan. 8, 2024. The last permit of the quota was purchased Jan. 25.

This is the second year for the 10,000-permit quota for nonresidents. In 2023 the permit sold out on March 24.

The fall turkey season permits will go on sale Aug. 12 at 1 p.m. central time.

For more information on turkey hunting, read the 2024 Turkey Guide at [OutdoorNebraska.gov](http://OutdoorNebraska.gov).

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: It's cold, very cold - check your batteries!



**By Craig Alderman** — As we began 2024, the polar blast hit us here in the midwest. Ambient temperatures went from 37 to -20 in hours causing a new phenomenon called “flash freezing,” and it created a real mess.

Because we had rain and lots of surface water in and around everything prior to nature’s surprise, when the flash freeze hit, much damage occurred to many homes, businesses, equipment, water lines and everything else you can think of.

One important point I want to remind everyone, take care of your batteries. Is this global cooling /warming? *No, winters are cyclical, weather is cyclical.* This has happened before and will happen again.

Cars and trucks, if they have a weak battery, will need a charge or replacement if your vehicle is left outside. Your ATV, UTV, RTV will need to be under cover and the smart move is to install the regulated low amperage chargers to the batteries especially if you will not be using them for a while. Check water levels regularly (use only distilled water if you need to add some).

Now the forgotten, the multitude of tool batteries we all have, in all colors, sizes and brands. Get them inside or your \$120 (or more) battery for the great drill or drill driver will be a total loss. Ask me how I know.



All batteries do not do well in very low temps. Get below zero and you will lose some or all and they discharge faster, hold less of a charge and are harder to charge to full capacity. Sooooo, bring them all in!

Here on the QUWF farm, it is part of the winterization process along with hauling the liquids, glues and anything that can freeze into the protected area of the basement or the office. For the tool batteries because work will go on, we keep chargers and batteries in the office.

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**Continued from Page 1** — It reminds me of a lesson Dad used to say, only floss and brush the teeth you want to keep. Same with batteries, only bring in the ones you want to keep using.

Temps got down to -24 ambient and stayed at or below zero for nearly three days. That kind of cold will destroy your tool batteries, not to mention that we hope your anti-freeze was right in the cars, trucks, tractors, dozers etc. Further, using them in extreme cold will cause issues of jamming, and poor performance regardless so if it is that cold, stay inside or work in areas with heat sources.

This time of year is great for the equipment fix, service and repair schedules at QUWF so we bring items into the barn, crank up the big wood stove with heat activated fans and get it up to a comfy 40 degrees to start our projects. Tools work just fine at that temp and so do I but we bring the batteries back in the house after we are done.

Spring is coming ... it is ... just not tomorrow.

Catch you across the mud season.

*Craig Alderman is the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation executive director.*

## Oklahoma: Wildlife department looks ahead to '24

**By Wade Free** — Turning the calendar to another January, I wonder what this year is going to bring. Exciting fishing trips, heart-racing hunts, and making memories with my family come to mind. Well, we here at the [Wildlife Department](#) also have some things on the Outdoor Oklahoma radar that we want to share with you.

We're working with legislators to modernize, consolidate, and update **hunting and fishing licenses**. Currently, there are more than 100 offerings, and we want to simplify that to fewer than 20. As an example, we're proposing a "youth super license" for anyone younger than 18 that would cost \$25 for residents and \$100 for nonresidents. This license would replace all other hunting licenses for them; they could hunt any species or season that's open.

We will look closely at **nonresident deer hunting and management**, especially as it relates to our public hunting areas. Our **wild turkey research** will continue, and we've implemented another tool to track local turkey populations.

We will also be assessing the economic value of our two year-round **trout fisheries** on the Lower Mountain Fork and Lower Illinois rivers in an effort to better manage these important fisheries.

Several years ago, we began an aggressive effort that aims to renovate a dozen existing **public shooting ranges** and build 20 new ones. The next new build will likely start this spring at Atoka Wildlife Management Area (just down the road from the campgrounds).



As part of our continued effort to expand and improve boating and fishing access for our constituents, we have 12 **boating and fishing access projects** that will be completed, started, or awarded in 2024.

We continue to monitor and **manage the fisheries** at our amazing lakes, rivers, and streams, and will again stock about 15 million fish statewide.

Oklahoma again will host the **Bassmaster Classic** on March 22-24 at Grand Lake, with weigh-ins at the BOK Center in Tulsa.

Our **Game Wardens** are often a first point of contact with the public. Here's a handy link to their phone numbers: [wildlifedepartment.com/law/game-warden-directory](http://wildlifedepartment.com/law/game-warden-directory). Please help them help all of us by letting them know if you see anything that doesn't look right out there in the woods or on the water.

And lastly, please check out our **Wildlife Conservation Foundation** ([okwildlifeconservation.org](http://okwildlifeconservation.org)). Its sole purpose is to provide financial support for the Wildlife Department, and you can see a list of projects it has funded online: [okwildlifeconservation.org/projects](http://okwildlifeconservation.org/projects).

I look forward to working with our amazing staff to provide the very best fish and wildlife resources our state can offer, and I wish you a great 2024!

*Wade Free is the interim director of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.*

## AR: AGFC adds Forest of Fish attractors at Beaver Lake

**ROGERS** — Arkansas Game and Fish Commission staff in northwest Arkansas spent two weeks in December, taking advantage of the low water and unseasonably warm weather to tackle a huge fish attractor project, adding 119 new fish habitat sites to the 57-year-old reservoir.

Thanks to funding from Bass Pro Shops, Toyota and the National Fish Habitat Partnership, the AGFC has been able to use a specially modified habitat barge outfitted with a winch-assisted dump bed and twin engines to move large trees and branches to areas of the lake where woody cover is scarce.

“We’ve also received a second barge from a Bass Pro Shops grant that is identical to the first one we received through the Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership,” AGFC regional fisheries biologist Jon Stein said. “This barge has placed more than 100 habitat sites using at least 800 trees on Beaver Lake, Lake Fayetteville, Lake Elmdale and Lake Bob Kidd.”



The first week of the project focused on the Hickory Creek and Monte Ne areas, where anglers will find 55 new habitat sites. Twenty of these sites were made from lumber fashioned into “porcupine cribs.” The remaining 35 sites were created using large hardwood trees removed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Monte Ne.

The second week of the project took place in the Indian Creek arm and around Dam Site Island where 64 fish habitat sites were created using more than 180 large cedar trees. These and the hardwood trees used during the effort were removed from the surrounding banks with special permission from the Corps. The cedar removal also helped with a larger effort to control this species that has encroached on many habitats during decades of fire suppression on the landscape.

The GPS waypoints for these new habitat sites have been added to the [Fish Attractors page of the AGFC website](#).

## Maryland’s Primitive Deer Hunt Days are Feb. 1-3

The [Maryland Department of Natural Resources](#) announces the state’s [Primitive Deer Hunt](#) will be open Feb. 1-3 statewide. Hunters with a valid hunting license, or those exempt from the hunting license requirement, may use primitive bows or muzzleloaders to hunt sika and white-tailed deer during these days.

Primitive hunting devices are defined as long bows, recurve bows, flintlock, or sidelock percussion muzzleloaders. Hunters may not use compound bows, crossbows, drawlocks, and telescopic or other electronic aiming devices. However, fiber optic sights are permitted on otherwise legal primitive bows or muzzleloaders.

“The Primitive Deer Hunt allows hunters to connect to the earliest sportsman by using the same weapons that they did years ago,” [Wildlife and Heritage Service](#) Director Karina Stonesifer said. “The February hunting season provides hunters a chance to pursue a deer one last time and enjoy the crisp winter air.”

Any deer harvested during the Primitive Hunt Days count against the hunter’s 2023-24 archery or muzzleloader bag limit for antlered and antlerless deer. An exception is in Region A – Allegany County, Garrett County, and the western portion of Washington County – where hunters may harvest one antlerless deer that will not count against their existing archery or muzzleloader bag limits.

Hunters are encouraged to consult the [Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping](#) for more information on the Primitive Deer Hunt and other deer hunting regulations.

During the Primitive Deer Hunt days, Maryland requires deer hunters and their companions to wear daylight fluorescent orange or daylight fluorescent pink in one of the following manners: a cap of solid fluorescent daylight orange or pink, a vest or jacket containing back and front panels of at least 250 square inches of fluorescent daylight orange or pink, or an outer garment of camouflage daylight fluorescent orange or pink worn above the waist and containing at least 50 percent daylight fluorescent color.

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

**Continued from Page 3** — Hunters should carefully inspect all tree stands and always wear a full-body safety harness while in the stand and while climbing in or out. The department strongly recommends using a sliding knot, commonly known as a prusik knot, attached to a line that is secured above the stand that allows the hunter to be safely tethered to the tree as soon as they leave the ground.

Hunters are encouraged to help others by donating deer taken in Maryland. A state tax credit offers hunters an incentive for donated deer. Other local or state programs are also available; hunters should check with their deer processors.

*Photo by Randall Gornowich, submitted to the 2022 Maryland DNR Photo Contest.*



## Benelli introduces the Montefeltro Ultra Light

**Accokeek, MD** – Nothing compares to a crisp, bluebird autumn day when the birds are plentiful, the dogs are on, and there is always “one more” spot to check just over the horizon. It is days like this for which Benelli’s engineers developed the all-new Montefeltro Ultra Light.

With its shortened barrel — 26-inch for the 12-gauge model and 24-inch for the 20-gauge model — combined with a reduced-length magazine tube and featherweight carbon-fiber stepped rib, the Montefeltro Ultra Light boasts a comfortable 6.3 and 5.3 lbs. for the 12- and 20-gauge versions, respectively. That reduced weight and shorter length translates to effortless shouldering and faster swings on quick-moving birds. Should higher round capacity beyond the standard 4+1 be required, the Montefeltro Ultra Light’s open mag tube can easily be modified with an optional extension.



As with all shotguns in the Montefeltro line, the Montefeltro Ultra Light features Benelli’s Inertia Driven system to deliver clean operation and reliable cycling from the lightest to the heaviest field loads.

AA-grade walnut with an exquisite satin finish comprises the sculpted, classically styled stock and forend bridged by a gloss black anodized receiver. This is complemented by a Crio®-treated gloss blued barrel. Benelli’s WeatherCoat™ finish on the stock and receiver ensures the Montefeltro Ultra Light will hold up to any adventure and cut a fine figure in the field or on the range for years to come.

For more information on Benelli’s Montefeltro Ultra Light shotgun or to learn more about Benelli USA’s full line of premium shotguns and centerfire hunting rifles, visit [BenelliUSA.com](http://BenelliUSA.com).

## Community Pond program grant funds available

Groups or individuals interested in constructing or improving a community fishing pond have until Feb. 1 to apply for a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks’ Community Pond Program grant. The objective of the Community Pond Program is to enhance public fishing opportunities in or near Montana communities by providing funding that may be used to construct or improve a public fishing pond.

A total of \$200,000 in grant funds is available for projects on ponds that offer public fishing opportunities. Past projects include building habitat structures, dock installations, pond dredging, ADA-accessible angling amenities and the purchase of aerators.

Applicants must provide at least 30 percent of the total project cost, which can include contributions such as heavy equipment time, construction materials, labor, engineering services and more. Anyone wishing to sponsor a project may apply.

Since 2003, the Community Pond Program has funded projects that benefit young anglers and their families by providing locations where individuals of all ages can learn angling skills. Additional information on the Community Pond Program, including a grant application form, [click here](#).

Applications, which are accepted each year, must be received on or before Feb. 1. Applicants are required to contact their local FWP fisheries biologist to obtain project support.

## NSSF, ATF, DOJ emphasize ‘Don’t Lie for the Other Guy’

**Editor’s Note: At QUWF We must all be vigilant especially at banquets and events to ensure all required regulations are met and followed by dealers assisting the events.**

**LAS VEGAS** — NSSF®, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, together with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Department of Justice (DOJ), announced a month-long public education campaign reminding the greater Las Vegas area public about stiff penalties facing individuals convicted of unlawful firearm purchases. The “Don’t Lie for the Other Guy™” campaign is in its 24th year and drives home the message that anyone making an illegal firearm purchase faces a federal felony penalty of up to 15 years in prison and up to \$250,000 in fines. An additional 15 years can be added if the straw purchase is made with the intent of trafficking across state lines. The program is funded in full by the firearm industry and now also includes federal funding allocated to ATF by Congress. Las Vegas was chosen for this specific campaign by ATF.

“The firearm industry has always been fully committed to keeping firearms out of the hands of those who should not possess them. This is a critical and

**NSSF®** *The Firearm Industry Trade Association*

never-ending effort. We are proud to launch this public awareness campaign in Las Vegas and of our more than two-decade cooperative relationship with ATF, DOJ and the entire law enforcement community to assist them in their efforts to reduce criminal acquisition of firearms,” said NSSF President and CEO Joe Bartozzi.

The Las Vegas area “Don’t Lie” campaign will total more than 33 million gross media impressions. This includes an outdoor campaign across 30 digital billboards along high-traffic roads and freeways, as well as a transit campaign throughout the region with the message: “Buy a gun for someone who can’t and buy yourself 15 years in jail. Don’t Lie for the Other Guy.” Ads will run on targeted bus routes utilizing 50 bus kings and 75 transit station posters across the market. In addition, the campaign includes 1052 FM radio spots on five of the largest Las Vegas radio stations and more than 3.7 million targeted impressions across Facebook and Instagram, as well as geofenced mobile display ads.

To legally purchase a firearm, a person must pass an FBI National Instant Criminal Background Check System verification, or NICS check, and fully comply with all state and local laws. When a criminal is illegally trafficking in firearms or knows they cannot pass this check, they may try to induce a friend or acquaintance to make the purchase for them. This is a straw purchase and is a felony.

The “Don’t Lie for the Other Guy” program also involves educating firearm retailers to better detect and prevent straw purchases by providing “Don’t Lie for the Other Guy” retailer kits containing a training video and information for storeowners and staff, as well as point-of-purchase displays aimed to deter illegal straw purchasers.

Learn more about “Don’t Lie for the Other Guy” at [www.dontlie.org](http://www.dontlie.org).



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# Record participation in Big Squirrel Challenge

**Editor's Note: GREAT Idea to get the kids outside and try a time honored hunt.**

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's third Big Squirrel Challenge drew 139 teams statewide at 12 sites over last weekend, but the biggest of the squirrels seem drawn to Yellville, where the overall winners in every division brought their bags to the AGFC's Fred Berry Crooked Creek Nature Center and claimed top prize.

Tate Milligun and Emet Moore turned in a bag of fox squirrels totaling 2,401 grams to claim the Youth Fox-only Division and also the biggest bag of any pair of hunters statewide. Taylor Biggs and Justin Cochran were the overall winners in the Adult Fox-only category, hauling their 2084-gram bag into Crooked Creek Nature Center. Other overall winners there were Will and Misty James in the Adult Mixed Bag Division with 1865 grams and Sophia Layton and Hank Duran in the Youth Mixed Bag Division, with a 1910-gram bag.

Twenty-one teams brought in their harvest at Yellville, the most of any site. Jonesboro had 18 teams along with 64 total participants, the most in the state.

Fort Smith had 13 teams participating but was right behind Yellville in terms of bag weight in several categories. Jack Ishii and Lyle Smith were just edged out by the Biggs-Cochran duo in the overall standings of Adult Fox-only, but their 2050 grams won their division in Fort Smith over Jeremy Slaten and Steve Hunt by a mere 10 grams. Ishii and Smith also bested the field in Fort Smith in the Adult Mixed Bag with 1725 grams, while Jayden Ishii and Ariyen Xia Chokbengboun were best in the Youth Mixed Bag Division in Fort Smith with 1826 grams.

Hunters took to the woods from noon Friday to noon Saturday, with up to two people making up a team and pursuing bushytails during regular hunting hours, then bringing their harvest to one of the 12 sites. Individual youths could hunt with an adult mentor in their divisions.

The Big Squirrel Challenge began in May 2021 at one location, the J.B. and Johnelle Hunt Family Ozark Highlands Nature Center in Springdale, before being expanded in January 2022 to a statewide event. Hunters could harvest their legal limit of 12 squirrels per person, but only the top three squirrels, skin on and field-dressed, were weighed at the end of the event, and each squirrel could only be weighed once — meaning, squirrels weighed in the fox-only division could not be weighed again in the mixed bag grouping. When the weigh-in was done, all squirrels were returned to the hunters to enjoy at the dinner table.

Each regional first- and second-place team received medals. The statewide overall winners received additional prizes. Door prizes were also awarded at each weigh-in facility during the event.

## Regional Winners, Division, Total Grams per Bag

**Batesville, Paul H. Willmuth Shooting Sports Complex:** Hank Chriswell and Shane Hiter, Adult Mixed, 1463; Philip and Payton Duncan, Youth Fox-only, 1695; Donnie and William Horton, Youth Mixed, 1772.

**Columbus, Rick Evans Grandview Prairie Nature Center:** Chad Rader and Cameron Tatom, Adult Mixed, 1779; Braiden Friend and Karson Pach, Youth Mixed, 1231.



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**Continued from Page 7 — Fort Smith, Arkansas River Valley Nature Center:** Jack Ishii and Lyle Smith, Adult Fox-only, 2050; Jack Ishii and Lyle Smith, Adult Mixed, 1725; Hunter and Matthew Moore, Youth Fox-only, 2008; Jayden Ishii and Ariyen Xia Chokbengboun, Youth Mixed, 1826.

**Jonesboro, Crowley's Ridge Nature Center:** Jacob and Josh Wicker, Adult Fox-only, 1912; Ethan King and Haylee Nye, Adult Mixed, 1597; Jake Johnson-Luke Tarlton, Youth Fox-only, 2087; Colin Kifer, Beau Dooley, Youth Mixed, 1617.

**Magnolia, SAU Laney Farm:** Benson and Benson, Adult Mixed, 1594; Clark and Cupples, Youth Fox-only, 2234; Goodgion and Goodgion, Youth Mixed, 1707.

**Mayflower, Camp Robinson Shooting Range:** Willie Elliott-James Harris, Adult Mixed, 1616; Timothy Paulette-Elijah Paulette, Youth Mixed, 1790.

**Mike Freeze Wattensaw WMA Headquarters:** Trey Munger and Steve Stublefield, Adult Fox-only, 1897; Phillip Skipper, Adult Mixed, 1506; Zack and Zane Lovett, Youth Fox-only, 1859; Anthony and Addyson Elliott, Youth Mixed, 1447.

**Monticello, AGFC Southeast Regional Office:** Michael Dodson, Adult Mixed, 1627; Nick Chapman, Youth Mixed, 1490.

**Russellville, AGFC West Central Regional Office:** Clay Titsworth and Jesse Johnson, Adult Fox-only, 579; David Burgener, Adult Mixed, 1501.

**Pine Bluff, Delta Rivers Nature Center:** Michael Ware, Adult Fox-only, 1698; Michael Ware, Adult Mixed, 1464; Cooper and Reese Stron, Youth Fox-only, 1305; Alex and Mattox Watkins, Youth Mixed, 1352.

**Springdale, Ozark Highlands Nature Center:** Terry Cloud, Adult Fox-only, 1198; Kraig Rutherford-Cameron Clark, Adult Mixed, 1817; Colton Hendrix-Chris Hendrix, Youth Fox-only, 1939; Brady Cotton-Bentley Cotton, Youth Mixed, 1747.

**Yellville, Crooked Creek Nature Center:** Taylor Biggs and Justin Cochran, Adult Fox-only, 2084; Will and Misty James, Adult Mixed, 1865; Tate Milligun and Emet Moore, Youth Fox-only, 2401; Sophia Layton and Hank Duran, Youth Mixed, 1910.

## CVA announces voluntary recall for CVA Crossfire

CVA has identified a concern related to the welds between the barrel and barrel lug on a limited number of CROSSFIRE rifles featuring Burnt Bronze Cerakote® / Nitride barrels.

There is a possibility that dropping the firearm or repeated firings could compromise the weld, leading to a separation of the barrel from the lug during firing.

Therefore, CVA is initiating a Voluntary Recall for all such firearms currently in the distribution channel. CVA Distributors and Dealers with these firearms in inventory should immediately contact their CVA Sales Coordinator to obtain a Return Authorization and receive information regarding replacement or credit.

Additionally, Distributors and Retailers should contact all customers who have purchased these firearms and notify them of the recall.

Please instruct these customers to call CVA Customer Service immediately at 1-770-449-4687 to obtain a Return Authorization and receive information regarding replacement options or a refund.

This recall applies to CVA CROSSFIRE rifles with nitride-treated barrels ONLY (CR3804NM and CR3804NSC) and DOES NOT apply to standard stainless steel barreled firearms.

Visit [www.cva.com](http://www.cva.com) where you can find more information on the CVA Crossfire.



## Stoeger introduces M3500 Predator/Turkey shotgun

**Accokeek, MD** — For years, discerning waterfowl hunters have enjoyed the hard-hitting, far-reaching performance of the Stoeger M3500-series semi-auto shotguns. For 2024, Stoeger Industries brings that same performance to the woods and fields with the all-new M3500 Predator/Turkey.

The M3500 Predator/Turkey begins with a 24-inch ported barrel chambered for 3.5-inch 12-gauge. Fitted with a stepped, vented rib and high-visibility red-bar front sight, the M3500 Predator/Turkey is ready for the hunt right out of the box. For those who prefer an optic, the receiver comes drilled and tapped for mounting.

Supporting the barreled receiver is Stoeger's SteadyGrip™ stock system with a vertical pistol grip for optimal hand positioning and maximum comfort when waiting for the shot. A plush recoil pad combines with the ported barrel to mitigate felt recoil when shooting heavy magnum loads.

In keeping with the shotgun's field hunting mission, the M3500 Predator/Turkey is dressed in Mossy Oak®

Overwatch™ camo. And since hands-free mobility is a major assist for the run-and-gun turkey hunter or when hustling to a new coyote set, the M3500 Predator/Turkey comes with integrated sling swivel studs and a strong, silent paracord sling.

As with all M3500 shotguns, the M3500 Predator/Turkey manages loads via the Inertia Driven system. This system, backed by a 4-round magazine tube, ensures reliable cycling and clean operation for even the heaviest turkey and buckshot ammunition. To make sure those shot columns hit the mark, the M3500 Predator/Turkey comes with two MOJO specialty chokes designed to deliver tight patterns and consistent point-of-impact performance.

To learn more about the new M3500 Predator/Turkey shotgun, or to see the full line of Stoeger handguns and shotguns, visit [StoegerIndustries.com](http://StoegerIndustries.com).

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## FWP to require field day for youths taking online hunter ed

**Editor's Note: We at QUWF feel the inclusion of hands-on training at the state level for hunter education is a critical part of creating the sportsman and woman to go afield. We congratulate Montana for including the field day as part of the qualification process.**

Starting Jan. 1, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks will require Hunter and Bowhunter Education students age 12 to 17 who take the online course to pass an in-person field day. Students in that age group must pass both the online exam and the field day to earn a course completion certificate.

For Hunter Education, the in-person field day will require students to practice and demonstrate key safety skills related to firearm handling, the four main rules of firearm safety, and the PROVE procedure, which stands for "Point, Remove, Observe, Verify, and Examine." Students will demonstrate how to safely cross a fence with a firearm, hand off a firearm, and remove a firearm from a vehicle, among other practical safety skills. In addition, students will discuss hunting ethics, landowner relations, land ownership and access, FWP's Block Management Program, wildlife conservation, and more. In-person field days for Bowhunter Education will similarly feature hands-on safety practice and demonstrations.

Students who are 12 to 17 and are currently in progress with the online Hunter or Bowhunter Education courses must complete their coursework before Jan. 1, or they will be required to complete an in-person field day. Montana law requires everyone born after Jan. 1, 1985, to complete a Hunter or Bowhunter Education course before purchasing or applying for Montana hunting licenses. Students 10 years and older can take an in-person course. Students 18 and older can take the online-only course.

Instructor-led in-person courses are an excellent way to provide new hunters with a hands-on learning experience and can be particularly beneficial for people who have minimal experience in the field or handling firearms. These courses are taught by dedicated volunteer instructors, often from local communities.

For more information on course options, becoming a volunteer instructor and to sign up for an in-person or online course, visit [fwp.mt.gov/hunt](http://fwp.mt.gov/hunt).

## Maryland to host waterfowl hunting day for youths

Maryland's youth hunters, veterans, and military personnel can experience the excitement of this season's second special waterfowl hunting day; Saturday, Feb. 3, 2024. A previous hunting day was held in November.

"This special hunt day, reserved for youth, active duty military, and veteran hunters, gives experienced hunters a great opportunity to introduce someone new to Maryland's waterfowling heritage," Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service Director Karina Stonesifer said. "For many folks, whether they're a mentor or a hunter, this day represents one last chance to experience a duck or goose blind together before many of our hunting seasons close for the year."

Those 16 years of age or younger and military veterans (as defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code) of any age and members of the Armed Forces on active duty, including members of the National Guard and military reserves on active duty (other than for training) may hunt ducks, geese, and coots on both public and private land on Feb. 4, 2023.

Youth hunters must be accompanied by an unarmed adult at least 21 years old or by eligible military personnel also participating in the hunt. All eligible hunters and adult mentors must possess Maryland hunting licenses or be exempt from hunting license requirements. Any adult participating in this hunt will need to purchase both a Maryland Migratory Game Bird Stamp and a Federal Duck Stamp. Youth hunters, including those possessing an [apprentice license](#), must purchase a Maryland Migratory Game Bird Stamp but do not need to purchase a Federal Duck Stamp if under 16 years of age.



The [bag limits](#) for this hunting day is the same as the regular seasons except:

- Two scaup may be taken;
- Two Canada geese may be taken when hunting within the [Atlantic Population \(AP\) Canada Goose Hunting Zone](#); and
- Five Canada geese may be taken when hunting within the [Atlantic Flyway Resident Population \(AFRP\) Canada Goose Hunting Zone](#).
- For information on public hunting lands and [Wildlife Management Areas](#), please see pages 60-63 of the [2023-24 Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping](#).

Licenses, stamps, and permits may be purchased [online](#), by phone at 855-855-3906, at a [Natural Resources Service Center](#) or at any one of the more than [250 Sport License Agents](#) statewide.

Hunters with questions may contact the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service at 410-260-8540.



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

# Notes from the Road:

## No habitat project is too big or too small



**By Nick Prough** — First off, I wanted to mention and thank the multiple positive comments from several landowners this past month about December’s article regarding “Working on the Big 3” on your habitat management efforts as we enter 2024.

If you happened to miss that during the busy holiday season, I would encourage you to go back and look at that article to help guide your habitat efforts even further as we head towards springtime as well as it ties in very nicely with this current article below.

I wanted to comment a bit on the question that is often asked from many different landowners regarding is my habitat project too small to do any good or is my project just too big to accomplish and my simple answer is always NO. Habitat projects for wildlife come in all shapes, sizes and costs, as well as in scope and scale of the project that you are going to be undertaking. Probably one of the most important guiding principles that I often tell landowners including one just this week who has seen tremendous results from his working on the “Big 3 Habitat Efforts” for the past couple years.

Even if you just pick a couple of acres to work on at a time and really focus your efforts into creating quality habitat that the wildlife species you are managing for are truly needing and utilizing then the project can and will often have excellent results that many times can be seen quite quickly. I say this because landowners all have different circumstances for which they can manage the property they own or manage.

Many times, the amount of time is limiting, or the available acres, or their budget or a whole host of other competing land uses for that particular farm or tract of land. I always say start small accomplish your goals for that project and then expand from there to the next step/level seems to be a time tested and proven method for hundreds of habitat projects I have been involved in over the years with landowners across the country. Many landowners may only have a 40-acre tract they are managing while others may have 400 or even 4000 acres, but while the scale of the total project may change you really truly only work on 1 acre at a time.

This also ties in nicely with the fact that wildlife generally is concerned with the current acre they are inhabiting or the next acre they are headed towards. Does the acre they are using have all the food, water and cover they are requiring at that time of year? If you continue to modify your scale of your project and keep this in mind as your project goals and objectives continue to evolve along the way then you are well on your way to a very successful habitat project no-matter what the species you are managing for is.

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 QUWF chief wildlife biologist and landowner liaison.*



## Introducing the Ruger LC Carbine chambered in .45 auto

Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc. (NYSE: RGR) is excited to introduce the Ruger® LC Carbine™ chambered in .45 Auto. This lightweight carbine features a 16.25" threaded barrel, adjustable folding stock, Ruger Rapid Deploy folding sights and ambidextrous controls. With the stock set to the shortest length of pull, this LC Carbine is just 28.66" in length. The .45 Auto version features an updated right- and left-hand bolt release, octagonal handguard, reversible magazine release and is compatible with most off-the-shelf, Glock-pattern, .45 Auto magazines.

The LC Carbine features an aluminum free-float handguard with M-LOK attachment slots, QD attachment points for slings, and a full-length Picatinny rail for AR-height optics. The folding stock is reversible and features an adjustable length of pull, but can easily be replaced with AR-pattern stocks. The rear of the receiver has a Picatinny rail for maximum accessory compatibility. Ergonomic enhancements include an ambidextrous manual safety, ambidextrous bolt release, reversible charging handle and reversible magazine release. The LC Carbine can be easily disassembled without tools, allowing for convenient cleaning and maintenance.

The LC Carbine utilizes Ruger's safe, reliable and proven Secure Action™ fire-control mechanism that combines a protected internal hammer with a bladed-safety trigger that has a short, smooth pull, clean break and positive reset. Made in the USA of strong and lightweight materials, the Ruger LC Carbine is ideal for the range, home, or your next hunt.

For more information on the Ruger LC Carbine in .45 Auto or to learn more about the extensive line of award-winning Ruger firearms, visit [Ruger.com](http://Ruger.com), [Facebook.com/Ruger](https://www.facebook.com/Ruger), or [Instagram.com/Rugersofficial](https://www.instagram.com/Rugersofficial). To find accessories for the Ruger LC Carbine and other Ruger firearms, visit [ShopRuger.com](http://ShopRuger.com) or your local independent retailer of Ruger firearms.

The acquisition, ownership, possession and use of firearms are 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.



## Ruger celebrates the 60th anniversary of the 10/22 rifle

In celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the timeless 10/22® rimfire carbine, Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc. is proud to introduce the Sixth Edition of the Ruger® Collector's Series - the 60th Anniversary 10/22 Carbine. Accompanied by unique collector's memorabilia, this Sixth Edition of the Ruger Collector's Series is a great way to start a 10/22 collection, add to an existing collection, or simply celebrate the 10/22 rifle's 60th Anniversary.

This rifle features a stainless steel barrel and silver-finished receiver paired with a Gray Magpul Hunter X-22 stock. The blackened bolt is laser engraved with a unique 60th Anniversary marking. The rifle is accented with a red bolt handle and trigger while incorporating popular 10/22 features like a non-glare blade front sight, ghost ring adjustable rear aperture sight, extended magazine release, and a Picatinny rail. The anniversary model also retains common 10/22 features like the push-button, cross-bolt manual safety and 1/2"-28 threaded cold hammer-forged barrel that accommodates popular muzzle accessories.

The 60th Anniversary 10/22 ships in a Collector's Series box with a Sixth Edition Ruger Collector's Series metal street sign and pin.

For more information on the Ruger Collector's Series 10/22 or to learn more about the extensive line of award-winning Ruger firearms, visit [Ruger.com](http://Ruger.com), [Facebook.com/Ruger](https://www.facebook.com/Ruger) or [Instagram.com/Rugersofficial](https://www.instagram.com/Rugersofficial).



## Grace Engineering acquires Montana Rifle Company

**Memphis, MI** – Grace Engineering, the sister company of G5 Outdoors and Prime Archery, announces its entrance into the firearms market by acquiring Montana Rifle Company (MRC). Known for precision manufacturing, Grace Engineering is a 3rd generation precision machining manufacturer with over 50 years of industry-leading experience. They have long provided components to many leading firearms companies, and the acquisition of Montana Rifle Company will now allow them to apply their expertise to the entire firearm construction. Honoring the American hunting tradition, all Montana rifles are designed, manufactured, and assembled at the Grace Engineering headquarters in Memphis, Michigan.

"We have been producing precision parts for the firearms industry for a number of years," stated Grace Engineering President Matt Grace. "When the opportunity to acquire Montana Rifle Company was presented to us, we knew it would be a good fit. Montana Rifle's much sought-after action design and highly accurate barrels have been well known among avid rifle hunters. We are excited to continue the MRC legacy and take it to new heights. We have relocated many key pieces of equipment from the original Montana Rifle, such as barrel making. In addition, we have invested heavily into new state-of-the-art machining centers to make a world-class rifle."

Applying their expertise in design and engineering, Grace Engineering enhanced the performance, quality, reliability, and accuracy of the original Montana Rifle by integrating a fully machined receiver that is made from a single 416 stainless steel billet. This MRC 2022 receiver is a continuation of the original MRC 1999 receiver and is one of only a few manufactured in this manner. This allows for tighter tolerances and greater control over the finished product compared to receivers built from castings.

Each Montana Rifle also features a breakthrough development in rifle feeding, which marks a monumental shift for rifle hunters. Many avid rifle hunters know that controlled round feed rifles are the gold standard for reliability. The one drawback against them was the inability to single load these rifles, as you can with push feed rifles. Montana Rifle's Adaptive Controlled Round Feed is unique to the market in its design, allowing for loading from a magazine as a controlled round feed traditionally does. Plus, you can single load a cartridge directly into the chamber. Now, you don't have to make a choice between a Push Feed or a Controlled Round Feed. Adaptive Controlled Round Feed actions gives you the best of both worlds. Making Montana rifle the "Fastest, most reliable feeding rifle on the market."

In addition, these premium hunting rifles are constructed with hand-lapped, button pulled ultra-accurate barrels – something Montana Rifle Company has always been known for. All 24" threaded barrels are built in-house using the same equipment and methods as the original Montana Rifle Company.

### **Additional MRC features:**

- A Mauser-style claw extractor made from tool steel for consistent round ejection and a smooth feed for the cartridge.
- 3-Position Safety. With safety in mind, the rifles utilize a 3-position safety – the gold standard of modern sporting rifles.
- Patent-pending licensed M-Lok interface with traditional sling stud and QD socket. Made from high-thickness anodized aircraft aluminum, this rail is perfect for easy integration of M-Lok style bipods, tripods, and other attachments.
- Threaded Muzzle Brake – Every factory rifle comes with a standard threaded muzzle brake and includes a thread protector.

**Continued on Page 14**

### **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 13**

- Nitrided Chromoly Bolt – Stronger than standard stainless steel, chromoly provides a high strength-to-weight ratio. The slick nitrided surface also delivers a smoother cycle compared to stainless steel.
- Adjustable Trigger. Inspired by the Pre-64 Model 70 trigger geometry, the MRC trigger is simple to adjust and operate. It features precision wire EDM cut from tool steel and is coated in Titanium Nitride for enhanced operation and wear resistance. The performance trigger is set at 3 lbs. with the ability to adjust down to 2 lbs.
- Premium Stocks – Montana Rifle Co. is working with premium stock manufacturers, McMillan for its carbon stocks and Minelli for its wood stocks for superior performance in the field and an elegant look in any collection.
- Guaranteed ½" MOA Accuracy. All Model 2022 rifles are guaranteed to hold ½" MOA from a cold barrel when using premium ammunition.
- 100% American Made. Proudly made in Memphis, MI, using world-class manufacturing processes.

**Availability**

The MRC Model 2022 is currently available in two models. The premium walnut stock Junction and the ultra-rugged Highline. Both are now available in 6.5 Creedmoor and .308 Win, with .300 Win Mag, 6.5MM PRC, 7MM PRC, and .375 H&H Mag being introduced later this year. For more information on Montana Rifle Company and its products, please visit, <https://montanarifleco.com/>.

**6.5 Creedmoor Junction Specs:**

Weight: 7.5 lbs.  
Overall Length: 45.25"  
Twist Rate: 1:8  
Barrel Length: 24"  
Mag Capacity: 5

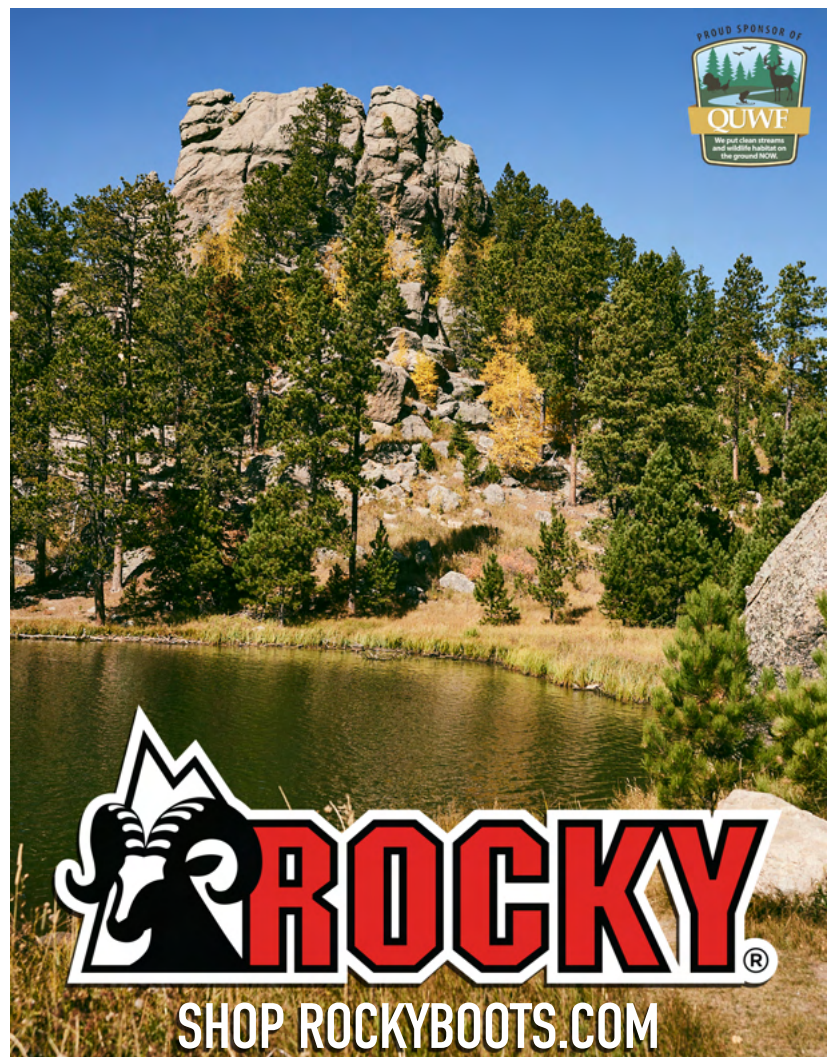
**6.5 Creedmoor Highline Specs:**

Weight: 6.8 lbs.  
Overall Length: 45.25"  
Twist Rate: 1:8  
Barrel Length: 24"  
Mag Capacity: 5

**About Montana Rifle Company:**

Montana Rifle Company is the premium manufacturer of American-made hunting rifles backed by over 50 years and three generations of machining and hunting industry expertise. Montana Rifles are built from the action out. All critical parts are blueprinted, made in-house, and built to meet Grandpa's standards and your toughest adventures - to be handed down for generations. For more information on Montana Rifle Company and its products, please visit, <https://montanarifleco.com/>.

*Montana*  
RIFLE COMPANY



# WY women’s antelope hunt applications open now

There are three ways to participate as a hunter in the Wyoming Women’s Antelope Hunt. Sponsors, individuals, and scholarships help us fill the approximately 46 hunt spots available.

Criteria for selection of each hunting spot is based on a written statement by the hopeful participant and reviewed by Hunt Planning Committee members. WYWF is looking for applicants passionate about women's economic self-sufficiency, mentoring, and camaraderie through hunting.

**Feb. 5:** Sponsor & individual applications close

**Feb. 15:** Notify sponsor applicants

**Feb. 15:** Notify individual hunter applicants

**Feb. 15:** Scholarship application opens

**March 15:** Scholarship application closes

**May 1:** Notify scholarship applicants

**May 1:** Pronghorn Buck Spot will be offered



Wyoming Women's

hunt ANTELOPE HUNT and

[Click Here](#) to receive updates about the annual applications

[Click Here](#) to get notified when the Scholarship application opens in February

## Pronghorn Bucks Bonus Hunt Spot

This year we will continue the Pronghorn Bucks bonus spot and compile “preference points,” based on donations to the?Hunt scholarship fund, Shelley’s Fund, Ride the Range Fund or the Wyoming Women’s Foundation **December 2023 through April 30, 2024**. Donors receive one Pronghorn Buck per dollar of tax-deductible donations.?One hunt spot will be available to the donor with the highest number of Pronghorn Bucks?at the?regular registration?rate?for?an individual or sponsored hunter, in addition to their previous donations.?We will continue to develop the Pronghorn Bucks program in the future.

Questions? [Email Alex@wycf.org](mailto:Alex@wycf.org).

## About the Wyoming Women’s Foundation

Established in 1999, the *Wyoming Women’s Foundation (WYWF)* is one of a family of funds held at the **Wyoming Community Foundation (WYCF)**. WYWF makes grants and spearheads initiatives that benefit women and girls as well as our communities overall. As a statewide leader dedicated to promoting women and girls, we leverage funds through our endowment, and grantmaking is focused on lasting change. The mission of the Wyoming Women’s Foundation is to invest in the economic self-sufficiency of women and opportunities for girls in Wyoming. Since 1999, WYWF has made more than \$1 million in grants to nonprofits advancing self-sufficiency for Wyoming women and girls. Learn more at [wywf.org](http://wywf.org).

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## Wyoming hunters reminded to submit harvest surveys

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department wants to know how your Wyoming hunt went this year. Many hunters have received a harvest survey via e-mail or the U.S. Postal Service. The survey gathers harvest information and feedback on the 2023 hunting season. It takes only a few minutes to complete and contributes valuable data for monitoring the state's wildlife populations, setting future quotas, season dates and other regulations.

Because of the large volume of antelope, deer and elk license holders, a random sampling of those licensed hunters are surveyed. Not all license holders of those species will receive a harvest survey.

However, nearly all license holders for moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, black bear, mountain lion, gray wolf, wild turkey, furbearer, sandhill crane, small game, upland game, migratory game bird, light goose conservation order and sage-grouse are included in the survey process throughout the year as each season closes.

Hunters who complete their antelope, deer or elk harvest surveys by the deadline will be entered in a drawing to win one of several gift cards or prizes donated by outdoor retailers and organizations.

Deadlines to submit harvest surveys for your chance to win a prize:

- Antelope: Jan 4, 2024
- Deer: Jan 25, 2024
- Elk: Feb 5, 2024

Harvest surveys are being conducted by the Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC) at the University of Wyoming on behalf of Game and Fish. Your responses are confidential.

Hunters who have questions about the surveys can contact the WYSAC survey team directly at 1-866-966-2715 or [email wylhunter@uwyo.edu](mailto:wylhunter@uwyo.edu). For questions related to hunting regulations or license applications, call Game and Fish at 307-777-4600.



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# A message from Ruger: America's favorite hunting rifle

## The Next Generation is Here

Ruger is proud to introduce the Ruger American® Rifle Generation II, an update to the American-made rifle that has been the benchmark for accuracy, durability, and performance in bolt-action rifles for over a decade.

New features include a durable, attractive Cerakote® finish on the barreled action, a threaded bolt handle, stainless steel bolt body, and intuitive three-position tang safety that locks the bolt, which prevents inadvertent bolt opening yet allows the rifle to be loaded with the safety engaged. Most models also feature a spiral fluted barrel. The new, rigid stock features a removable comb riser to improve sight alignment when using optics, as well as a length of pull (LOP) spacer, which can be removed or replaced to accommodate a variety of statures.



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

# What is active forest management?

- Forest management is the use of forestry tools- including logging, thinning and controlled burning- to achieve certain objectives on a given landscape.
- These tools are often used for timber production, but also for forest restoration, wildfire mitigation, wildlife habitat enhancement and many other purposes.
- Logging itself doesn't prevent forest fires. Nothing can. But logging is a tool that can be used to reduce the fuels that make fire burn hotter and faster.
- Forest management tools can also provide access, fuel breaks and other strategies that give firefighters better and safer opportunities to contain fires before they get out of control.
- Active management protects communities from harmful, toxic smoke.



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# Our government hiding the details again: *Freedom of Information Act changes*

In 2018 President Trump began posting details about court settlements and attorneys' fees paid out to environmental groups and other organizations.

In June, 2022, Interior Secretary Deb Haaland signed and announced [Secretary's Order 3408](#) revoking the previous Order, which included several other provisions in addition to the posting of attorneys' fees and consent agreements.

"The previous order added unnecessary obstacles to the department's ability to enter into rational and fair settlements, imposed requirements and timelines inconsistent with those set by courts, and added redundant reporting obligations," Interior said in a statement at the time Haaland signed the new Secretary's Order.

The litigation page that had been posting details about court settlements and attorneys' fees paid out to environmental groups and other organizations no longer exists.



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## 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.

