



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

Notes from the Dashboard: It's dove season!

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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.



By Craig Alderman — 'Tis the season of the greatest shotshell sales in the U.S., otherwise known as dove season. Thousands will go afield after the migratory mourning dove to enjoy a truly challenging wing shooting experience like few others.

In a prior life as a CEO of an ammunition company, dove season spelled one of the largest shipping times of any shotshell manufacturer. Why, there are many more missed shots than actual harvests, and the manufacturers depend on it. On average, statistical rumor has it that one shell per box of 25 would harvest a dove. Kinda like Las Vegas odds for manufacturers.

In truth, many go afield and see a lot of doves, flying in all directions, at all angles out maneuvering the sight abilities of the average hunter as they blast away at confusing multiple targets at once, hitting nothing but air molecules. There is an inherent reason, very little shooting practice is spent on preseason crossing, passing, leading or trailing shot placement.

One of the things I enjoyed most about shot gunning was the practice sessions. I shot a lot, on average about 50,000 rounds per year and still a moment of unfocused thought will cause multiple misses on targets or game. How did I practice?

My family and I were on the skeet range more than most, learning how to stand, changing distances, sight pictures and ensuring I was very sure about the choke selection and shot size I wanted and how it would perform. It was not unusual to go through an entire case of shotshells with one session. My boys often shared a 20G Charles Daly Over and Under only to have me take it away when the barrel would get cherry red from all the shooting. Both today are outstanding shots as is their mother. Then would come the sporting clays ranges to really hone the skills needed for multiple targets at various angles and distances. When you are in the field, changing chokes can really upset your focus if you do not practice and know what each can do with the load and manufacturer you have chosen.

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Continued from Page 1 — Make no mistake, your gun will perform better with certain brands of ammo, they are made differently though they all claim good performance.

Besides the ability to “see” the right sight picture of your dove in a split second, your favorite firearm must fit you right, always come up to the same place and be in good working condition. I shoot with an over and under for the most part and use it for trap, skeet, sporting and all wing shooting. No,



it’s not a Perazzi or anything close but I know its characteristics and it knows me. It has delivered perfect scores in trap and skeet, occasional trophies, all too many stories of missed shots, and great shots with my boys in South Dakota wing shooting.

Last point, know the laws, the licenses needed, the places you can hunt, the accessories to make it enjoyable and always know your shot zone and stay within it so all are safe in a dove field.

Enjoy Dove Season, catch you in the ol’ sunflower field.

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

QUWF sponsors \$10,000 ‘Hole in One’ tourney

The United States’ only national wildlife conservation organization, Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, Inc. in Missouri, is sponsoring the “Hole In One” of \$10,000 at the upcoming Veterans Benefit Golf Tournament at Dallas County’s own Dream Valley Golf Course on Saturday, Sept. 7.

Hole # 8 is the challenge for the prize. The Golf tournament is named in honor of Lonnie Howard, the local DAV Chapter prior commander and State Commander.

“We are appreciative of the opportunity to assist our local and regional veterans serviced by the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) with its efforts to raise funds in support of the direct needs of our local veterans and their families,” said Craig Alderman, a veteran himself and founder of QUWF. “My membership in the DAV chapter revealed the important function the DAV provides to all military veterans.”

The DAV is the only veteran organization formed as an official act of the U.S. Congress as a 501C4 national organization to serve all veterans. The DAV uses every penny raised to assist those veterans and their families locally, in need. Locally, all chapter members, officers and service officers are volunteers, receiving no compensation.

“We also want to thank the golfers who fully fill all teams to provide a great event that means so much to the heroes to whom our freedom is based on. Dream Valley Golf Course helped the DAV create this benefit for all veterans and deserves special recognition, thank you. They have earned the support of our community as well,” Craig reflects.



Pheasant survey predicts another year of good hunting in Iowa

Results of Iowa's 2024 pheasant population survey are in and the results were nearly identical to the 2022 and 2021.

The annual August roadside survey found Iowa's statewide pheasant population to be 19 birds per 30-mile route, down from 23 birds per route in 2023. The decline was expected after much of Iowa received 3-7 inches of rainfall above normal during the nesting season.

"Iowa hunters have enjoyed good pheasant hunting over most of the state for the past five seasons, including last year, when we had the highest harvest in 16 years. If our dry weather continues into fall, the corn and soybean harvest could be mostly complete by opening day, and that usually leads to good success," said Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife research biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Based on the results of the August roadside survey, Iowa hunters can expect to harvest 350,000 to 400,000 roosters. Last year, Iowa saw an increase of an estimated 20,000 pheasant hunters over 2022, which helped push the harvest to nearly 600,000.

"Last year, pheasant hunting was the best it's been since 2007, and while the numbers from the survey were lower, it's shaping up for another good fall," he said. The full report is available at www.iowadnr.gov/pheasantsurvey.

Iowa's quail population was led by the southwest and west central regions of the state.

"Route after route, we had staff recording quail further into the west central region," Bogenschutz said.

Iowa's partridge population was lower, with the better numbers coming from the northcentral and northwest region. The rabbit population was higher than last year with the better population in the south half of Iowa, but good numbers can be found across the state.

The annual August roadside survey has been collecting data on Iowa's upland game populations since 1962.

- Youth pheasant season is Oct. 19-20
- Pheasant season is Oct. 26-Jan. 10, 2025
- Quail season is Oct. 26-Jan. 31, 2025
- Rabbit season is Aug. 31-Feb. 28, 2025
- Partridge season is Oct. 12-Jan. 31, 2025

2024 waterfowl population survey results

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) released its 2024 Waterfowl Population Status Report. This report contains results from surveys and population estimation methods conducted by the USFWS, Canadian Wildlife Service and numerous state and provincial partners.

The estimate for total breeding ducks in the traditional survey area was 34 million, a **5% increase from the 2023 estimate** of 32.3 million, and **4% below the long-term average** (since 1955). Mallards were estimated at 6.6 million, 8% above 2023, but 16% below the long-term average and among the lowest since the early 1990s.

Notably, the results mark the first increase in total surveyed breeding ducks since 2015.

"This year's report suggests that some duck populations had better production last year than expected, with good carryover to spring of this year," said Dr. Steve Adair, Ducks Unlimited chief scientist. "While estimates were down in the prairies, population levels were up in northern breeding regions. We heard reports of an early spring, with ducks migrating through when the prairies were still dry and likely overflying to the Boreal Forest. This is a pattern we've seen many times before, and it appears to have been the case again this year."

Despite the increase from 2023, overall population levels remain below the long-term average, reflecting the continued effects of multiple years of drought in the Prairie Pothole Region.

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Continued from Page 3 — However, the importance of conserving habitats across diverse geographies revealed its value, as breeding areas outside the prairies helped maintain or increase population levels for some species over 2023.

Results for the six most abundant species in the eastern survey area remained healthy, with most species estimates increasing from 2023.

Key 2024 Survey Takeaways

- **2024 marks the first documented increase (+5%)** in year-to-year total surveyed breeding ducks in the traditional survey area since 2015.
- **Mallards** increased by 8% and **wigeon** numbers increased by 55%.
- **Pintails** were down 11% from 2023, but at a level that will provide the opportunity for a three-pintail daily limit in the 2025–26 hunting season under the recently approved interim pintail harvest strategy.
- **Total pond estimates** in the U.S. and Canadian prairies were 5.2 million, a 4% increase from 2023. Although rain in April and May fell too late to benefit early migrants, it should have improved conditions for late nesters and brood production.
- **Alaska, British Columbia** and other northern survey areas saw improved habitat conditions and noteworthy increases in breeding numbers.
- **Eastern survey area duck numbers** increased in five out of the six major species while mallards saw a small drop.

Pond Numbers

Mother Nature brought welcome rain back to large portions of the prairies. Despite a brief reprieve two years ago, the prairies again turned dry in 2023, and drought worsened through winter. Dry conditions prevailed entering spring 2024, but widespread rains in April and May created excellent wetland abundance in some areas. The total pond estimate in the U.S. and Canadian prairies was 5.2 million, **up 4% from the 2023 estimate** of 5 million. Some areas, such as Prairie Canada, were down 19% while the northcentral U.S. was up 49%, demonstrating the dynamic nature of this landscape.

“Although pond numbers fluctuated in some regions, rains that fell immediately prior to the survey boosted prairie pond numbers more than many anticipated,” Adair said. “Rains continued well after the surveys were conducted, bringing life-sustaining water to large portions of the prairies. While not fully reflected in the survey results, these improved wetland conditions should have benefitted late-nesting waterfowl, reneating and brood survival.”

Regardless of pond counts and precipitation, waterfowl need productive habitats across their annual range to breed, migrate and winter successfully. Ducks Unlimited, in collaboration with the USFWS and numerous other governmental, nonprofit and corporate partners, recently surpassed 18 million acres of protected or restored waterfowl habitat across North America. Ducks Unlimited continues to collaborate on innovative research projects to better understand the needs of waterfowl and guide conservation efforts.

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Continued from Page 5 — Wetlands and grasslands across the U.S. and Canadian prairies continue to face persistent threats. For example, between 2017 and 2021, an estimated 415,000 acres of grasslands were converted annually to agricultural and other uses. These losses emphasize the importance of sustained investments in on-the-ground conservation and the science and monitoring that guides our work. Without these data, our understanding of the status and threats to waterfowl populations and their habitats would be severely constrained.

Relationship to Harvest Regulations

According to the companion Adaptive Harvest Management report released simultaneously with these survey results, the USFWS will again recommend a **liberal duck season framework** for all four flyways during the 2025–26 season. Additionally, duck hunters across the U.S. may have the opportunity for a three-pintail daily limit next year for the first time since 1997. This recommendation originates from a recently approved interim pintail harvest strategy. To learn more, visit the [USFWS website](https://www.usfws.gov).

“North American waterfowl are arguably the most intensively studied group of animals on the planet, and the Adaptive Harvest Management process continues to be the gold-standard for modern wildlife harvest management,” Adair said. “We express gratitude to our state and federal partners for their reliance on clearly defined objectives and science-based decision making to guide harvest regulations, ensuring waterfowl populations remain healthy and available for enjoyment by many generations to come.”

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2024 WATERFOWL SURVEY
DUCKS.ORG/DUCKNUMBERS

SPECIES	2024	2023	% CHANGE FROM 2023	% CHANGE FROM LTA
MALLARD	6,609	8,128	-8%	-18%
GADWALL	2,284	2,561	-11%	+11%
AMERICAN WIGEON	2,922	1,890	+55%	+12%
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	3,005	2,503	+20%	+38%
BLUE-WINGED TEAL	4,599	5,250	-12%	-10%
NORTHERN SHOVELER	2,646	2,858	-7%	0%
NORTHERN PINTAIL	1,975	2,219	-11%	-49%
REDHEAD	0,782	0,930	-16%	+6%
CANVASBACK	0,566	0,619	-8%	-4%
SCAUP	4,069	3,517	+16%	-17%
TOTAL DUCKS	33,988	32,305	+5%	-4%
MAY PONDS (US & CANADA)	5,159	4,975	+4%	-1%

Numbers in millions. LTA Long Term Average
Based on Traditional Survey Area
Waterfowl Photos: michaelfyfe.com

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Continued from Page 6 — Survey Background

The breeding surveys that evolved into the Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey began in 1947 and are recognized as the world's most thorough and accurate wildlife survey effort. The primary purpose of the survey is to provide annual information on spring population size and trajectory for 19 North American duck species, or species groups, Canada geese and swans, and to evaluate prairie breeding habitat conditions by estimating the number of May ponds.

Data collected from the survey inform hunting regulations in the United States and Canada and provide vital information for researching relationships between waterfowl and their habitats, which are critical to effective conservation planning. The results are eagerly awaited by hunters, scientists and the waterfowl management community.

Each spring, the USFWS and Canadian Wildlife Service send air and ground crews into the 2-million-acre survey area, which stretches from Alaska's Seward Peninsula to the shores of Newfoundland, and south nearly to the Nebraska-South Dakota border. The Canadian Wildlife Service also operates three helicopter aircrews who survey portions of eastern Canada. For weeks, teams fly, drive and hike survey routes across vast landscapes and numerous types of waterfowl habitats.

What's Next for Prairie Pothole Habitat

These numbers reflect the importance of ensuring sound habitat exists for waterfowl. This spring, Ducks Unlimited [received a \\$100 million gift](#) from longtime partner Cox Enterprises and Jim Kennedy. This new fund is specifically earmarked to help Ducks Unlimited conserve North America's prairie region.

The Prairie Pothole Region of the northern Great Plains, often called the Duck Factory, is one of the most important areas for duck production in North America. Each year this region supports more than half of the continent's breeding ducks.

Private lands are a vital component of healthy landscapes for waterfowl and the future of conservation in this region. With help from voluntary incentive-based programs, such as those in the U.S. Farm Bill and the USFWS Small Wetlands Acquisition Program, farmers and ranchers play a vital role in securing our remaining waterfowl habitats. A [report released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) also identifies that wetland loss rates have increased by 50% since 2009.

Fish, wildlife, sport shooting enthusiasts add billions to economy

Oklahoma's anglers, hunters and sport shooters are big players when it comes to supporting the state's economy and at the same time supporting outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation.

Outdoor enthusiasts created an impressive **\$5.8 billion** in total economic impact to the state's economy, according to a recent analysis by [Southwick Associates](#) based on the latest federal [National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-associated Recreation](#). And these groups collectively shelled out about **\$4.7 billion** in direct spending across the state. For more about the sizable impact that hunters, anglers and sport shooters have in Oklahoma, click the button: [Economic Impact](#)

ODWC annual report

Your [Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation](#) works diligently to conserve the state's fish and wildlife resources, manage habitats, and promote public access to the outdoors. These activities come with costs, which are covered in large part by revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and permits.

The Wildlife Department receives no state-appropriated tax money. Its operation is based on the [North American Model of Wildlife Conservation](#), in which fish and wildlife management is funded as a user-pay, user-benefit system. That means hunters, anglers and other outdoor recreationist provide most of the funding for conservation. And much of that income is matched many times over with federal grant funding.

Every year, ODWC produces an annual report with details about agency operations. For fiscal year 2024, ODWC spent \$62,007,209 across its five organizational divisions and for capital projects. Revenues for the year totaled \$61,084,535, with about \$21.3 million of that generated by license sales.

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Continued from Page 7 — For more about ODWC operations during FY 2024, click the button: [FY 2024 Annual Report](#)

As dedicated hunters, anglers and sport shooters, your commitment helps protect and enhance Oklahoma’s natural resources. Buying licenses directly supports fish and wildlife conservation efforts, habitat restoration, and sustainable practices that ensure future generations can enjoy these activities.

ODWC is grateful for the support of all outdoor enthusiasts and takes very seriously its mandate to watch over the natural resources that belong to all of us. We are committed to stewarding our constituents’ money in the most effective and efficient ways possible.

For more about ODWC’s commitments to strong oversight, better services and complete transparency, click the button: [Accountability](#)

The next time you buy your hunting or fishing license, remember that you’re not just taking part in a cherished tradition, you’re also playing a crucial role in the economic vitality of Oklahoma. Together, we can continue to support our communities, conserve our resources, and ensure that outdoor pastimes remain integral to Oklahoma’s identity.



White-tailed deer in Idaho tests positive for CWD

Idaho Fish and Game recently received test results confirming a positive case of chronic wasting disease in an adult female white-tailed deer roughly 3 miles outside of Bonners Ferry in hunting Unit 1. The deer was reported to Fish and Game by a landowner who found the dead deer in early July.

The positive test result marks the first known case of CWD in north Idaho.

Fish and Game is currently developing a plan for disease sampling to determine the prevalence and distribution of CWD in the area. The timing of the detection will allow hunters to take an active role in providing samples for the effort.

The goal of [Fish and Game’s CWD Strategy](#) is to detect and minimize the spread of the disease to maintain healthy big game herds into the future, which cannot be accomplished without help from hunters.

“While we are disappointed by the detection of CWD in north Idaho, the department is well-prepared to respond to the situation thanks to having a comprehensive Chronic Wasting Disease Strategy, a history of sampling for CWD in deer throughout the area, and experience dealing with affected populations in other parts of the state,” said Panhandle Regional Supervisor Carson Watkins. “Going forward we’ll be working closely with the Boundary County community to chart a course for long-term management of CWD on the landscape.”

Fish and Game would like to sample as many deer, elk and moose as possible in Unit 1 and adjacent units to evaluate the extent of the disease in the area.

Currently, Fish and Game is asking all hunters participating in deer, elk or moose hunts in the Panhandle to have their harvested animal tested for the disease. Hunters can take heads of harvested deer, elk and moose to any regional Fish and Game office to have samples collected or get directions on the [Fish and Game CWD webpage \(idfg.idaho.gov/cwd\)](#) on how to collect and submit samples themselves.

Fish and Game will also have numerous drop-off sites located around the Panhandle Region where hunters can deposit heads or samples from harvested animals to be tested. Those locations can also be viewed on Fish and Game’s CWD web page.

Fish and Game is also asking people to report any roadkill deer, elk and moose in the Highway 95 corridor from the vicinity of Bonners Ferry to the Canada border, as well as along Highway 2 from Bonners Ferry to the Montana state line. If people observe deer, elk or moose that appear to be sick in Boundary County, they are encouraged to report the observation to Fish and Game by calling (208) 769-1414.

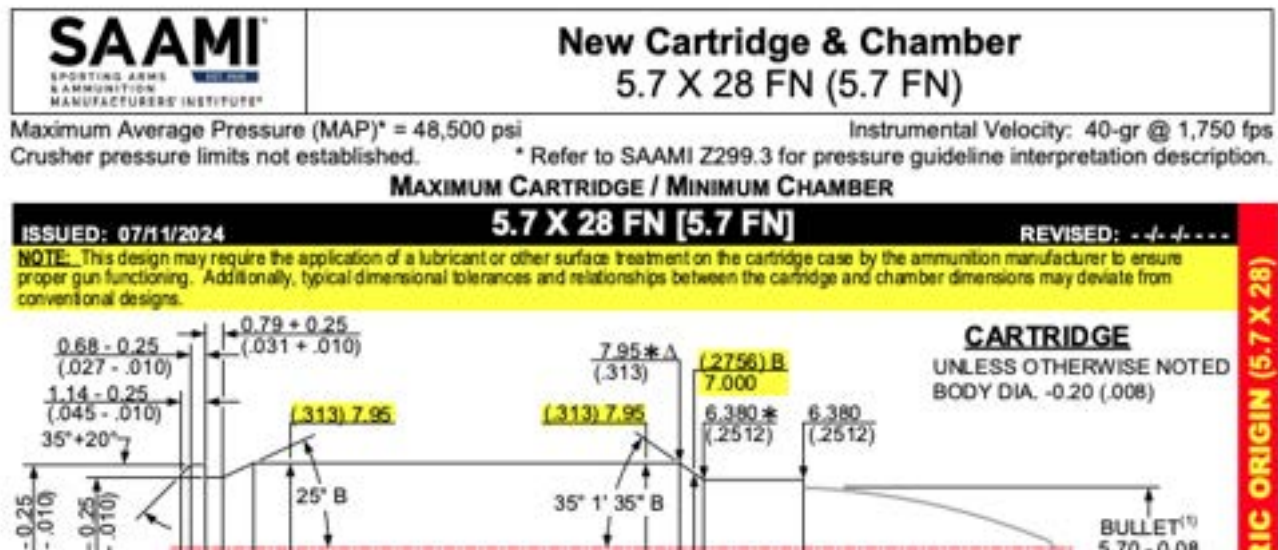


SAAMI announces acceptance of new cartridge

SHELTON, Conn. — The Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute®, Inc., (**SAAMI®**), has announced the acceptance of the 5.7 X 28 FN centerfire pistol and revolver cartridge. SAAMI is the organization at the forefront of promoting firearm safety by creating standards that ensure safety, reliability and interchangeability of firearms, ammunition and components.

5.7 X 28 FN – The 5.7 FN, originally designed by FN Herstal, S.A., was proposed for standardization by SAAMI Voting Member Fiocchi of America, in partnership with FN America, LLC. The cartridge features a 40-grain bullet traveling at a velocity of 1,750 fps from a 5-inch test barrel and a Maximum Average Pressure (“MAP”) of 48,500 psi.

For further information, including performance data and cartridge and chamber dimensions on this new cartridge please visit <https://saami.org/technical-information/cartridge-chamber-drawings/>.



Chronic wasting disease proclamation in North Dakota

Big game hunters should note the 2024 [chronic wasting disease proclamation](#) for baiting and transportation requirements for deer, elk and moose as a precaution against the spread of chronic wasting disease.

Noteworthy items include:

- Deer gun hunting unit 2B is removed from the list of units where [baiting is restricted](#) after the minimum sampling requirement was met with no positive detections.
- No new units have been added to the baiting restriction list for 2024-25.
- Hunters are prohibited from transporting into North Dakota the whole carcass or parts, except the lower-risk portions, of deer, elk, moose or other members of the cervid family harvested outside of North Dakota.

State Game and Fish Department officials will conduct [surveillance of the state](#) by region on a four-year rotation. This year, the CWD surveillance effort will consist of deer gun units in northeastern North Dakota. Outside of this area, hunters can still have their animal tested by taking it to a Game and Fish district office, any deer head collection site (primarily located in the surveillance area) or using a [mail-in self-sampling kit](#).

A unit outside the annual surveillance zone is still eligible to have a baiting restriction removed if the sampling goal is met, or can be added as a restricted unit if a positive is found.



Did you know?

Canada Lynx: Canada lynx, an endangered species in Vermont, has been confirmed in the state for the first time since 2018, and farther south than the last confirmed sighting. Canada lynx are endangered in Vermont and threatened nationally.

There are resident breeding populations in northern Maine and northern New Hampshire, northeastern Minnesota, northwestern Montana and northern Idaho, north-central Washington and western Colorado, according to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Pay Attention Michigan: Over 460,000 acres of Michigan forestland was sold to foreign countries in 2022. Approximately 92% of the foreign-owned acres are in the Upper Peninsula. This put Michigan among the top states for foreign farmland ownership with Upper Peninsula forestland accounting for the largest acreage.

North Carolina: 2025-26 proposed regulation changes

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) has been responsible for managing North Carolina's wildlife resources since 1947. Rules are one means of managing these resources to serve the interests of the State's citizens. Each year, the NCWRC reviews and adjusts seasons, bag limits, and land management regulations, as needed, to achieve conservation management goals, comply with statutory changes, and respond to constituent requests and suggestions.

Due to recent changes to the Administrative Procedures Act (the process by which State agencies must adhere to for rulemaking), the NCWRC modified the timing of our annual rulemaking cycle to regulate inland fishing, hunting, trapping and game lands more efficiently and effectively.

[The public comment period for 2025-2026 regulations is open now through September 13, 2024.](#) Given this new timeline, we are reaching out to ensure you are aware of this change and can engage in the rulemaking process if you are interested.

If you were unable to attend one of the public hearings, you can listen to the recording on our [YouTube channel](#).

We value your input, and the Commission will consider your input and the proposed changes at their October 2024 meeting. If adopted, the rules will take effect August 1, 2025, and will be in place for the 2025-2026 Inland Fishing, Hunting, and Trapping seasons.



Notes from the Road:

Patience is still a virtue in wildlife habitat management



By Nick Prough — In today's society of "we want everything faster than ever before" from our home deliveries from Amazon (they used to be two-day, and everyone was excited, then it became overnight, and now one-hour deliveries are common in many larger cities), to faster internet download speeds, and a whole lot of other things today's world demands is super fast.

However, the field of habitat management continues to take a long time not only to complete the hard work of manipulating the landscape but an even longer time to often see meaningful results on the landscape. I weekly get the question about how long will it take to get species X back on my property? Or how long does it take for my new native grasses to come up? I often answer the same way after more than 30 years of working as a wildlife biologist in the field — that all depends on a whole host of factors that we have talked about for many years in various articles and information we have discussed on topics including weather extremes, topography, existing habitat conditions, conservation practices chosen, and a whole bunch of other outside influencing factors.

But if you are looking for "Amazon speed" on your response of wildlife to your habitat management, you better closely look at and revise your timeline for your ongoing or upcoming habitat management project and their associated results. Once you have set a realistic timeline for completion of the habitat practices you are undertaking as well as realistic goals for the response and time it takes to see those results, then the remainder of the project can and will be much less stressful and a whole lot more enjoyable for everyone involved.

I often say, on native warm season grass seedings to get it into the ground at the proper time of year and then don't look at it for a couple years except to control any invasives that might be competing with your new NWSG stand. Many times, landowners go look at "their new grass seeding weekly or even every few days" and then call very frustrated in the lack of what they are seeing week to week. Once again, it takes time, and for many habitat practices and responses of wildlife to those changes often "A LOT OF TIME" in many cases.

Some species, of course, can and will respond to your habitat changes faster than others, and those are always a great thing for landowners to see a more rapid response to than others that they may have to be much more patient on. Dove field habitat management, for example, can be much quicker to implement as well as see doves at the first sign of early fall starting to use heavily in the habitat management practices you put into place, but quail response for example to native grass buffer strips can take a much much longer timeline to fully see any results of your efforts. So be patient, enjoy your time on the landscape helping reshape your specific landscape, and remember to set your realistic goals and timelines for your efforts.

I will leave you with one example of this very thing that just happened this week while I was out on a landowner site visit with a long-time landowner. I have worked with this landowner now for over a decade or more. We were just passing thru an excellent brood rearing field on the way to look at some recently controlled invasive species that had been sprayed a few weeks ago, and in this field that was once an older hayfield that had become much less diverse and less wildlife friendly over the past years.

So, just two years ago the landowner, upon my recommendations, decided to set that field idle and manage it for wildlife 100% with no haying to occur. While the field was managed for wildlife and improved for a much more diverse wildlife friendly field by allowing it to rest and recover, a whole host of wildflowers and forbs came back strongly in the 25-acre field over the past two years, with quality native grasses allowed to go fully to seed and once again thrive in the field.

The field, in fact, was managed on the edges in strips for quality brood rearing cover as well as edge feathering occurring on multiple edges of the fields tree lines. Additionally, as I mentioned, all three species of invasives have been fully controlled and removed as well over the past two years of more intensive wildlife habitat management activities.

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ALPS Mountaineering supports Philmont award

New Haven, Mo. - ALPS Mountaineering, manufacturer of performance gear for wilderness adventures, exploration, and family camping, proudly announces its collaboration with Philmont Scout Ranch in promoting the Wilderness Pledge Achievement Award for Boy Scouts of America. Through this partnership, ALPS Mountaineering reaffirms its commitment to environmental stability and empowering young scouts to become conscientious stewards of the wilderness.

The Wilderness Pledge Achievement Award encompasses various requirements, including participating in ranger-led training, following Philmont camping practices, engaging in conservation work, and adhering to the principles of the Philmont Wilderness Pledge, which emphasizes minimizing litter, respecting wildlife, conserving water, preserving trails, and maintaining clean campsites. By completing a series of requirements during their treks, scouts can earn the Wilderness Pledge Achievement Award Patch.



ALPS Mountaineering's involvement in this initiative expands beyond mere support, as the proceeds from the sale of the award will directly contribute to Philmont's sustainability initiatives, including recycling efforts and sustainability education. By investing in these programs, ALPS Mountaineering aims to foster a culture of environmental responsibility among future generations of outdoor enthusiasts.

For more information on ALPS Mountaineering and its commitment to sustainability, visit alpsmountaineering.com

Vermont's resident Canada goose season is Sept. 1-25

MONTPELIER, Vt. — Vermont's resident Canada goose hunting season will be held September 1 through September 25 to help control Vermont's resident Canada goose population prior to the arrival of Canada geese migrating south from Canada according to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

The season will be open statewide with a daily bag limit of five Canada geese in the Connecticut River Zone and eight in the rest of Vermont.

A second Canada goose hunting season for resident and migrant birds will be held October 12-November 10 with a daily bag limit of three Canada geese in the Lake Champlain Zone and Interior Vermont Zone.

In the Connecticut River Zone, the second Canada goose season will be October 9-November 11, and November 27-December 22 with a daily bag limit of two Canada geese.

For a third year, a late Canada goose season will be held targeting resident birds. Within the Lake Champlain and Interior zones, the season will be held from December 1 to January 19, with a five-bird daily bag limit. The season will run December 23 to January 11 in the Connecticut River zone and applies only to the lands of the zone, not Connecticut River waters.

A hunting license is required, and a waterfowl hunter 16 or older must carry current federal and Vermont duck stamps. **Federal stamps** are sold at post offices, federal refuges and on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website <https://www.fws.gov/birds/get-involved/duck-stamp.php>. Vermont is not one of the states where you can buy an electronic federal duck stamp, but you can purchase one from any state that sells them.

Vermont duck stamps can be added to your hunting license on Vermont Fish and Wildlife's website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com) and through license agents. The hunter must sign the federal duck stamp.

All migratory game bird hunters must also be registered with the Harvest Information Program (H.I.P.). This can be done on Vermont Fish and Wildlife's website or by calling toll-free 1-877-306-7091. After providing some basic information, you will receive your annual H.I.P. registration number, which you then need to record on your hunting license.

Antelope surveys show stable populations in most areas

Last week, hunters were notified if they successfully drew an antelope license for the upcoming season. The number of licenses drawn in each hunting district were based on recommendations Fish, Wildlife & Parks' biologists made after they completed aerial surveys of antelope herds during the last few weeks.

Surveys showed that antelope populations are stable in most regions, with some increases in particular hunting districts. FWP determines the number of licenses issued for each antelope hunting district depending on the summer surveys. The number of licenses can be adjusted within a range approved by the Fish and Wildlife Commission for each hunting district.

"FWP performs antelope surveys in July, provides quota adjustments by the end of that month, and conducts the draw within two weeks," said Brian Wakeling, FWP game management chief. "This exemplifies how FWP responds to survey data in real time."



DNR reopens salt waters for clam harvesting in GA

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources announced the re-opening of the state's salt waters to the commercial and recreational harvesting of clams, effective at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 16, 2024. This decision followed extensive water quality testing after the recent closure due to Tropical Storm Debby.

The precautionary closure, which was implemented to protect public health, is now lifted after careful analysis of water samples from all shellfish growing areas.

The samples were found to be below the bacterial threshold levels set by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC).

Key Details:

- Reopening Date and Time: Friday, August 16, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.
- Affected Area: All salt waters of the State of Georgia.
- Reason for Re-opening: Water quality has been confirmed as safe for shellfish harvesting following Tropical Storm Debby, which brought 7-10 inches of rainfall coastwide.
- Monitoring and Compliance: The decision to reopen was made based on sound principles of wildlife research and management, ensuring the safety and sustainability of Georgia's shellfish resources.

"The health and safety of Georgia's residents and visitors remains our top priority," said Walter Rabon, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. "We appreciate the patience of our commercial and recreational harvesters during the closure and are pleased to report that the waters are once again safe for harvesting."

DNR, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture, will continue to monitor water quality to ensure ongoing compliance with federal and state regulations.

Harvesters are encouraged to stay informed of any future updates through the DNR's official communication channels.



Hunting license sales remain steady in 2022-23

The Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports (Council) in collaboration with Southwick Associates, has released its annual report on hunting license sales, revealing a relatively steady trend for the 2022-2023 license year.

According to the report, over 80% of participating states experienced a change of 5% or less in hunting license sales from the previous year.

In early 2021, the Council conducted a comprehensive survey of state wildlife agencies, which showed an overall increase in hunting license sales by 4.9% from 2019 to 2020. This rise was attributed to the surge in outdoor recreation during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, as the pandemic extended into its second year, 2021 saw a dip of 1.9% in overall sales, despite the continued high demand for outdoor activities, particularly among nonresident hunters.

The Council revisited the study in early 2023 to track trends in hunting license sales for the 2022-2023 license year. The findings indicated a 3.1% decline in sales compared to 2020-2021 license year.

However, the latest report for 2022-2023 showed a much smaller decrease of just 0.3% across the 47 states that participated in the Council's study, suggesting a stabilization in participation rates.

"The 2022-2023 hunting license sales indicate that participation is likely relatively stable at the national level," said Swanny Evans, Director of Research and Partnerships for the Council. "This is a positive sign for the hunting and conservation community."

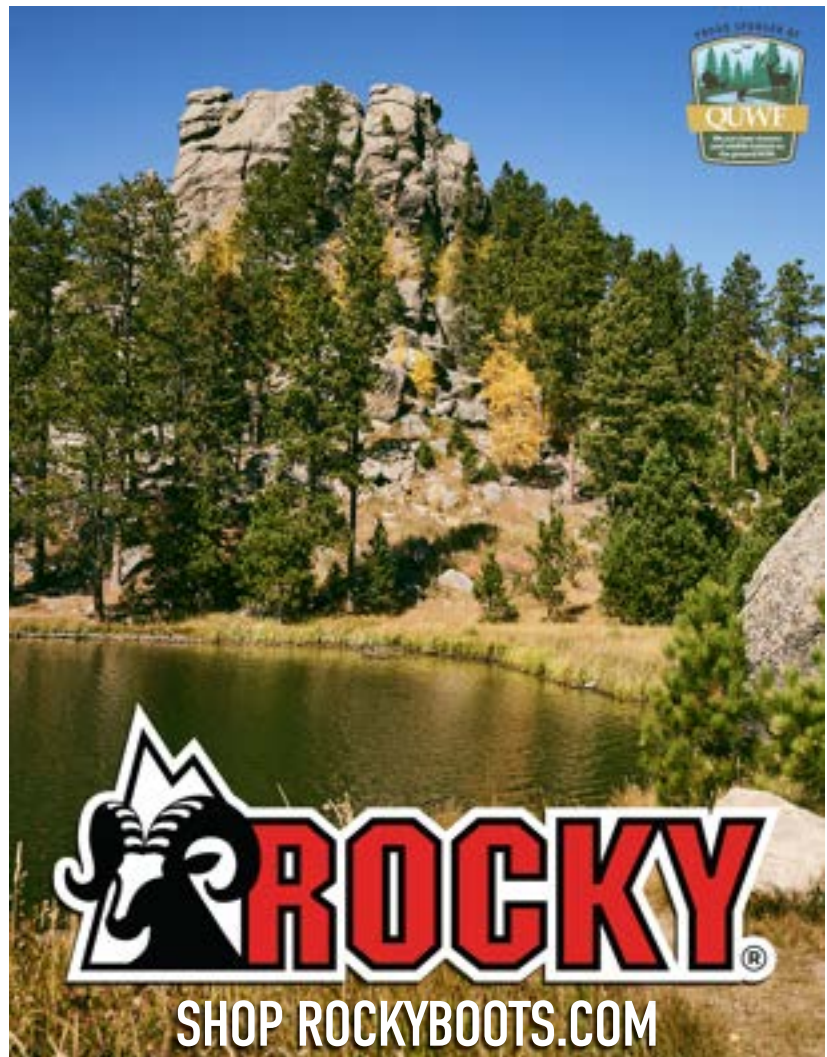
Key findings from the 2022-2023 report include:

- A 0.3% overall decrease in hunting license sales compared to 2021-2022, with resident sales down by 0.2% and nonresident sales by 0.6%.
- 51% of the 47 reporting states saw an increase in license sales.
- The Midwest region experienced a slight increase in sales by 1.0%, while the Northeast, Southeast, and Western regions saw decreases ranging from 0.6% to 2.1%.
- Monthly sales varied throughout the year, with notable increases in March, May, August, October, November, and December.

The Council's report underscores the need for continued R3 initiatives to maintain and grow the hunting community.

By analyzing trends and responding to changes, the Council aims to support the hunting community and ensure a sustainable future for the activity.

The full report, "Hunting License Sales 2022-2023," is available for download on the Council website at www.cahss.org.



Americans' attitudes toward hunting, sport shooting decline

The Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports (Council), in collaboration with Responsive Management, has unveiled the much-anticipated report, "Americans' Attitudes Toward Hunting and Sport Shooting 2024."

This extensive study, funded by a Multistate Conservation Grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, provides critical insights into American views on hunting and sport shooting. Swanny Evans, Director of Research and Partnerships for the Council, commented, "This report highlights the importance of understanding public opinion nuances to improve communication and engagement strategies within the outdoor industry. Public support is not the lowest on record, but it is significantly below the 81% approval we saw in 2021 and appears to be trending down."

The study found that public approval for legal hunting and shooting sports is at 76% which is a 5% decrease since 2021, equating to approximately 12.5 million Americans. Evans acknowledged the decline, stating, "The data from this report will be pivotal in shaping our efforts to promote hunting and shooting sports as relevant activities throughout all segments of society. It also helps identify concerns and aids in efforts to enhance safety and conservation education programs."

The 2024 report builds on years of data collection and trend analysis from Responsive Management, offering a comprehensive understanding of how American attitudes toward these activities have evolved. The study is based on a scientific, probability-based multimodal survey of U.S. residents aged 18 and older, ensuring a representative sample of the population.

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 — Key Findings:

- **Overall Approval Rates:** Rates of approval of legal hunting and legal recreational shooting are quite similar: 76% of Americans approve of each, while disapproval stands at 12% regarding hunting and 13% regarding recreational shooting.
- **Trends:** The trends analysis found slightly less approval of hunting and recreational shooting in 2024 compared to 2023, but that difference was not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. However, when compared to the high of 81% in 2021, the decline was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).
- **Regional Variation:** Approval of legal hunting is markedly higher among rural residents, males, and Midwest Region residents than among U.S. residents overall. Approval of legal recreational shooting is highest among rural residents, males, residents of small cities or towns, and residents of the Mountain West Region.
- **Motivations for Hunting:** Hunting for food receives the highest approval, with 84% of respondents approving of hunting for meat and 83% for obtaining locally sourced food. Conservation-related motivations also receive strong support, while trophy hunting is the least approved motivation, with only 29% approval.
- **Motivations for Recreational Shooting:** Shooting to learn self-defense skills receives the highest approval at 77%, with for competition (such as the Olympics) coming in close behind at 74%. Interestingly, for the challenge had the lowest approval of the motivations at 64% despite that being a component of competition.
- **Safety Perceptions:** While the large majority of Americans (70%) say that most sport shooters know how to safely handle firearms and are careful, a substantial percentage (16%) say that they do not know how to properly handle firearms. When added to the percentage who responded with don't know on the question (14%), 30% do not unequivocally say that most sport shooters know how to safely handle firearms and are careful.

Continued on Page 17



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Continued from Page 16 — The full report, "Americans' Attitudes Toward Hunting and Sport Shooting 2024," is available for download on the Council website at www.cahss.org.

The **Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports** mission is to facilitate the promotion and growth of hunting and the shooting sports and the education of the public on the contributions that hunters and shooters make towards wildlife conservation. For more information visit us online at www.cahss.org.

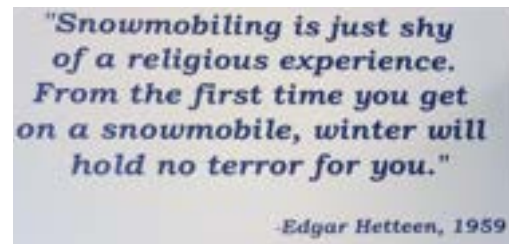
Responsive Management is an nationally recognized survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. With decades of experience, they provide valuable data and insights to help organizations and agencies make informed decisions.

The Council to Advance Hunting and the Shooting Sports is supported by the Multistate Conservation Grant Program as awarded by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. (F22AP00350)



Time to make winter plans: Beginning Thursday, Aug. 1, people may apply to the 2024-2025 winter lottery for permits to snowmobile in Yellowstone National Park without a commercial guide. The [Non-Commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program](#) allows permit-holders to enter the park for up to 3 days with a group of up to 5 snowmobilers.

This year's lottery will be open August 1- 31, 2024 at www.recreation.gov. Successful applicants will be notified in early September. Unclaimed or canceled permits will be made available via www.recreation.gov on a first-come, first-served basis beginning on October 1st. There is no waiting list. Cancellations may occur throughout the winter season, so check the website often for openings. Trips can be for a maximum of three days in length and permits cost \$40 per day with a \$6 application fee.



Permit holders are considered non-commercial guides and must be at least 18 years old. All snowmobile operators must possess a state-issued driver's license and successfully complete the free online [Yellowstone Snowmobile Education Certification program](#).

Editor's Note: There are many ways to enjoy our wild outdoors, snowmobiling opens the world of winter wonders in many areas of the country.

Did you know? Edgar Hetteen, one of snowmobiling's true visionaries, co-founded the Polaris snowmobile company in 1954 and later the Arctic Cat snowmobile company in 1959.



Iowa pheasant population survey begins Aug. 1

Pheasant hunters across the northern half of Iowa had an excellent season last year, and many are looking forward to what 2024 has in store. The fall forecast will be based on the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) annual roadside pheasant counts, that begins Aug. 1.

The statewide survey is conducted by Iowa DNR staff between Aug. 1-15, who drive 225, 30-mile routes on gravel roads at dawn on mornings with heavy dew. Hen pheasants will move their broods to the edge of the gravel road to dry off before they begin feeding, which makes them easier to count.

In June the DNR issued its annual prediction for the roadside counts, which uses a weather model based on the snowfall, rainfall and temperatures from the past winter and spring. The model provides a best guess at what the counts might look like, and it is predicting numbers to be likely lower than last year.

But the best indicator for the fall season is the August roadside survey that counts actual pheasants seen along more than 6,000 miles of rural, gravel roads.

The August roadside survey has been conducted over the same routes since 1962. In addition to pheasants 17

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Continued from Page 11 — I say all this to give you a background of what occurred next. As we passed through the edge of the same field that he often passes through every few days, we looked up and a large brood of quail chicks was hurriedly running in front of us out of the quality brood habitat and into the recently created edge feathered escape cover area. We, of course, stopped rapidly, tried to hurriedly get out our cell phone cameras to capture an image of them and watched as they disappeared into the very habitat we created for them.

We then “high-fived” as the landowner said, “Wow, it sure took a while, but it sure worked.” This was in fact the first quail chicks he had ever seen on his farm over the past decade, and it was great to see as both a landowner and a biologist, as that type of encounter doesn’t happen very often, even if you spend countless hours in the field as I do each and every week, all year long. We all just have to continue to remind ourselves to be patient, and your encounter with the wildlife species you are managing for will also happen!

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.



BLM Announces Advisory Panels: The Bureau of Land Management announced Thursday it plans to form an advisory panel to help guide the bureau as it works to implement its contentious public lands rule.

BLM also Thursday issued a series of internal guidance documents to bureau districts and field offices across the West addressing how to implement various components of the rule.

The Committee will represent a broad and diverse range of stakeholders and interests, and will help inform outreach and engagement, advise on best management practices, and participate in the development of agency guidance to support implementation.

In the coming weeks, the BLM will publish a call for nominations and a charter for the committee. We will share that information when available, but now is a good time to think about individuals that would be good representatives for the new Committees.



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Army veteran restores a family farm

A Fellowship Fund award through Tractor Supply Company enabled Gus Leigh to buy essential equipment and supplies, including feeders, waterers, chick-starter feed, and bedding for young chicks.

Reprinted from Farmer Veterans Coalition — After more than 30 years of wearing a uniform, whether in the service or as a police officer, Gus Leigh is now focused on running the family farm in Nebraska.

Farming isn't new to Leigh. He was raised in the small agricultural town of Bassett, Nebraska, and at age 14 and 15 worked on a small farm as a farmhand.

“My responsibilities included feeding and caring for pigs, chickens, horses, and cows, as well as assisting with daily milking,” he said. “During the summer months, I contributed to hay cutting in the fields. Through this experience, I acquired a range of skills essential to farm operations. I learned how to care for animals, repair fences and windmills, drive a tractor, brand cattle, ride horses, rope and castrate calves, and assist with the delivery of pigs and calves, often at all hours of the day and night.”

But he looked to joining the Army upon high school graduation. At age 17 he enlisted in the Nebraska Army National Guard as a medic. He completed basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, between his junior and senior years in high school and after graduation attended Advanced Individual Training at Fort Sam Houston in Texas.

During the first Gulf War, Leigh enlisted in the active-duty Army, serving approximately four years at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, before receiving an early release to pursue higher education. After two years of college, he returned to military service, joining the Nebraska Army National Guard, then he transferred to the Nevada Army National Guard, where he served an additional seven years as a traditional guard soldier and on Active-Duty Guard (AGR) status.

He was deployed in support of Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom, and received numerous commendations.

Leigh and his wife, Stephanie, lived in the Las Vegas area for 24 years. He was a Henderson, Nevada, police officer while Stephanie was a supervisor at Costco.

In 2020 they inherited 55 acres of farmland from his parents, Hugh and Susana Leigh, though the property had been neglected for more than three decades, he said. It fueled their plans to leave the city and pursue farm life.

Changes

In 2023 he retired after 20 years in law enforcement and Stephanie resigned from Costco.

“Together with Stephanie’s mother and our youngest daughter, we relocated to Neligh, Nebraska, where my parents reside,” he said. “Our primary focus became caring for our parents and restoring the farm. We envision establishing a farm-to-table enterprise that provides fresh eggs, chickens, turkeys, pigs, and cows to our local community and online markets, while also setting an example in regenerative agriculture.”

NE-Leigh Farm was helped by a \$1,000 Fellowship Fund gift certificate through Tractor Supply Company, which enabled them to buy essential equipment and supplies, including feeders, waterers, chick-starter feed, and bedding for young chicks in their brooder.

News of the Fellowship Fund was featured in their local news, which Leigh said brought out people to ask him about the award and the mission of Farmer Veteran Coalition.



Continued on Page 21

Continued from Page 20 — “We are committed to practicing regenerative and sustainable agriculture with our animals, aiming to improve our environment both above and below ground,” Leigh said. “However, the predominant agricultural practices in our area tend to be more conventional, relying on fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides.

“Large-scale operations, such as feedlots and enclosed hog and chicken raising facilities, are also commonly used throughout the region. This creates a narrow view of how and where to raise animals while also healing our environment.”

Leigh said he loves working the farm alongside his wife.

“With my wife as both co-owner and teammate, and guided by the good Lord and values we hold dear, I am confident that we will build a successful and prosperous farming business,” he said.

“We are committed to applying the lessons and experiences we have gained throughout our lives to enhance our farm, better ourselves, and support other farmers, ranchers, and our community.”



Electric Vehicles: General Motors announced they are laying off over 1,000 salaried employees with more than 600 of them being from the Warren Tech Center in Warren, Michigan.

In a statement, GM spokesperson Kevin Kelly said as the company builds its future it "must simplify for speed and excellence, make bold choices, and prioritize the investments that will have the greatest impact.

Ford is canceling plans for an all-electric sport utility vehicle and will tighten its spending on EVs overall. Ford will trim the capital spending devoted to EVs and will be scrapped in favor of a new hybrid option. The company will also delay the launch of a new electric pickup truck by 18 months.

“Our focus here is to remake Ford into a higher-margin, more capital-efficient and durable business,” Ford Chief Financial Officer John Lawler said in a media call Wednesday. “That means these vehicles need to be profitable, and if they’re not profitable based on where the customer is and the market is, we will pivot and adjust and make those tough decisions.”

The company will take roughly \$1.9 billion in write-downs and special item charges due to the shift in EV manufacturing, Lawler said.

Editor’s Note: We monitor the EV progress as it began to affect AG and Conservation equipment, which, in our opinion, would add exponential costs to future equipment without the electric grid to supply the charger. The super majority of charging stations are Deisel fuel supplied generators or on grids using coal , oil or propane.



Deer, elk hunters: Register for remaining CWD workshops

Arizona’s deer and elk hunters are urged to attend any of the four remaining workshops about Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), a fatal wildlife disease that affects the nervous system of cervid animals.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) had scheduled a total of eight workshops that began earlier this month at department headquarters and regional offices throughout the state. The remaining workshops will take place at regional offices in Tucson (Sept. 14), and Mesa (Sept. 21).

The workshops include a short lecture (20 to 30 minutes), followed by an outdoor demonstration (20 to 30 minutes) on how to collect and submit the required lymph node tissue sampling for testing. There also will be opportunities to speak with wildlife health personnel.

Hunters can register by sending an email to: snallagatla@azgfd.gov and include name, phone number, email address for each registrant, and preferred workshop date and location. Or register **here**.

AZGFD has been testing for the presence of the disease in Arizona since 1998 and has tested more than 30,000 samples. While CWD has been found in the neighboring states of California, Utah, New Mexico and Colorado, the disease has not been detected in Arizona.

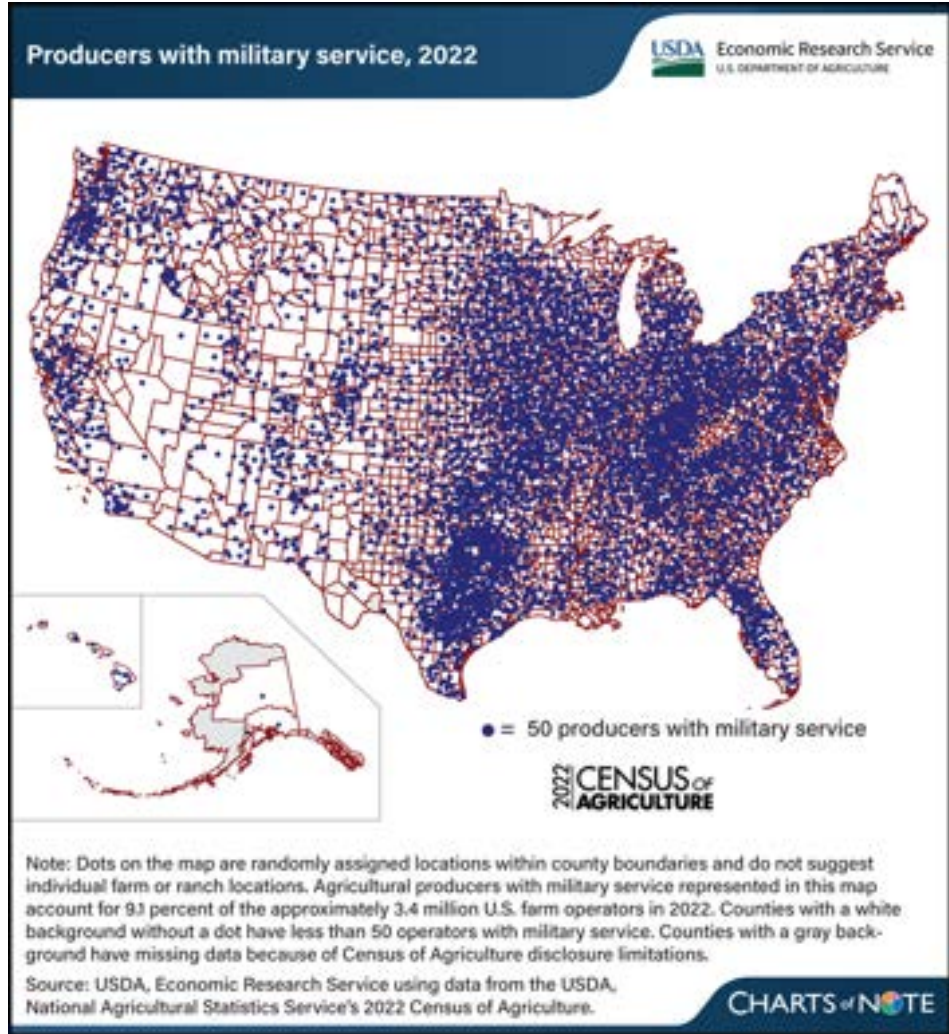
Majority of ag producers with military service located in east

Editor’s Note: Based on the included chart, it appears the Midwest to the Ohio valley, holds the larger portion of veteran farms. *Thank you for your service and now feeding this country and the world.*

The [2022 Census of Agriculture](#) shows that farms operated by a producer with military service generated 9 percent of the U.S. agricultural production value in 2022. These producers are located throughout the United States but are mainly concentrated in the eastern half of the country.

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years by USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service and collects characteristics on up to four producers per farm operation. Producers with military service are defined as those who are currently on active duty or have served on active duty in the past.

These producers accounted for 9.1 percent of all U.S. farm operators in 2022, down from 10.9 percent in the 2017 Census of Agriculture. Farms and ranches that have operators with military service produced, on average, about \$170,000 per farm in 2022, compared with an average of \$286,000 per farm for all operations. Information about farm businesses can be found in USDA, Economic Research Service’s [America’s Farms and Ranches at a Glance](#).



Michigan wildlife food plot field day is Sept. 14

Have you been curious about planting a food plot for wildlife but unsure how to start? Join us for a day in the field to learn about crops, planting techniques, soil testing and equipment.

Saturday, Sept. 14, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (lunch at noon)

Michigan State University Forestry Innovation Center, 6005 J Road, Escanaba, MI 49829

Registration is required. The event and lunch are free, thanks to our generous sponsors. Lunch will be provided on-site by Rollin' Smoke Barbeque for all registered attendees.



We will showcase more than 10 different food plots with combinations of different crops, providing a diverse range of examples to explore. There will be discussions on soil testing, including how to conduct tests, the costs involved and how to interpret the results. We will also cover fertilizer do's and don'ts, herbicide use and safety, and fencing options during growing seasons. Additionally, we will demonstrate equipment for landowners, such as an ATV and three-point sprayers and spreaders, no-till prairie planters, four-row crop planters, cultivators and cultipackers.



Members of Congress Visit Federal Land and Discuss Land Management: The Congressional Western Caucus was welcomed to Wyoming by Congresswoman Harriet Hageman, hosting a comprehensive discussion of western issues, including federal land management, water rights, and the state/federal relationship. They visited the Bridger-Teton National Forest and Grand Teton National Park and heard from the U.S. Forest Service about grazing and recreational opportunities and the importance of the multiple use mandate for public lands.

Congresswoman Hageman cosponsored [HJRes.188](#), which would nullify the BLM's "Conservation and Landscape Health" rule. Congresswoman said the BLM rule, "has been designed to upend long-standing management practices and multiple use of our federal resources, replacing them with the concept of "conservation" (never defining what that means)."

This BLM Rule will essentially eliminate all other historical uses that generate revenue for states and the federal government.

Hageman continued, "It is bad policy, based upon a total misunderstanding of land use and management in the West, and contrary to the very purpose for which the BLM lands were created in the first place. We will continue to fight this agency overreach and try to bring some common sense back into the discussion regarding how best to use and manage our federal lands."

***Editor's Note:** If you have not visited Yellowstone or the Grand Teton National Park, add it to your bucket list if you want to see nature in wonderful form. Elk, bison, moose, mountain sheep, mule deer, all were quite abundant as we toured the park and the Jackson Hole area. The cowboy history of the entire area is exceptional and a big part of our country's history.*



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Updated regularly!**

ALPS OutdoorZ dialed-in rifle vest now in stock

ALPS OutdoorZ, the premiere manufacturer of extreme-duty hunting packs and outdoor gear, rolls into the 2024 hunting season with the all-new Dialed-In Rifle Vest. In stock and ready to ship, ensuring that hunters are prepared for the season ahead.

Presented in high-visibility blaze orange, the Dialed-In Rifle Vest is a far step away from the often-ill-fitting safety vests of decades past.

Made from a comfortable and trim 4-way stretch fabric to prevent movement restrictions, this vest is offered in six different sizes to ensure a sleek, non-obstructive fit. No more snagging rifle scopes and branches or hanging up the firearm buttstock like the old-school universal-fit vests.

The Dialed-In Rifle Vest also delivers a high degree of function and convenience. There is one zippered chest pocket ideally positioned for quick access to a lens wipe or other small items, so you don't need to unmount from the gun when waiting in the prone position.

Left- and right-side zippered hand pockets are oversized to store larger items, including water bottles, rangefinders, gloves, and more. For tree stand hunters, the vest includes a safety harness pass-through port on the upper back panel.

Another benefit of the Dialed-In Rifle Vest is that it is built to meet the challenges of the field. A microfleece interior lining provides an added layer of warmth as well as elevated wind resistance to maintain comfort.

The inner lining is also ultra-quiet, minimizing or eliminating shifting noises, even when wearing over a coat or other outer garment with "loud" nylon shells.

The Dialed-In Rifle Vest is offered in the following sizes:

- **Small:** Chest Range 39" - 42"; Weight 12 oz.
- **Medium:** Chest Range 42" - 45"; Weight 12.75 oz.
- **Large:** Chest Range 45" - 48"; Weight 13.5 oz.
- **XL:** Chest Range 48" - 51"; Weight 14.25 oz.
- **2XL:** Chest Range 51" - 54"; Weight 15 oz.
- **3XL:** Chest Range 54" - 57"; Weight 15.75 oz.

For more information about this and other innovative products from ALPS OutdoorZ, visit alpsoutdoorz.com.



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Interior department provides \$325 million to increase access to the outdoors

Editor’s Note: Ask your state where they are spending the dollars. It is important to ensure the dollars go to the right projects.

PHOENIX — Acting Deputy Secretary Laura Daniel-Davis today announced the distribution of \$325 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Stateside Assistance Program to all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia – the largest annual distribution from the program since 1979. Investments from the LWCF are helping support the Biden-Harris administration’s *America the Beautiful* initiative by funding locally led outdoor recreation and conservation projects that protect and enhance access to America’s great outdoors.

Acting Deputy Secretary Daniel-Davis celebrated Arizona’s \$6.7 million award in Avondale today alongside local leaders and partners. She visited Sundance Park in Buckeye and was briefed on a \$3 million LCWF project, funded in 2021 and completed in 2023, for new construction of lighted multi-use fields, ramadas, a maintenance yard and other improvements. She then toured Donnie Hale Park, the recipient of \$557,000 in LWCF funding in 2021, to learn about their renovations of baseball fields, basketball courts, playground, ramadas, walkways, lighting, fencing and other amenities.

“The Biden-Harris administration is deeply committed to ensuring that all Americans, no matter where they live or how much money they earn, can enjoy the outdoors,” said **Acting Deputy Secretary Daniel-Davis**. “The Land and Water Conservation Fund is helping us deliver on that commitment through locally-led and community-driven projects that are creating greener neighborhoods, more recreational opportunities and improved access to nature.”

Continued on Page 26

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Continued from Page 25 — The [LWCF](#) was established by Congress in 1964 to fulfill a bipartisan commitment to safeguard natural areas, water resources and cultural heritage, and to provide recreation opportunities to all Americans. The fund helps strengthen communities, preserve history and protect the national endowment of lands and waters. Since its inception in 1965, the LWCF State and Local Assistance Program has funded more than 46,000 projects in every county in the country.

In 2020, Congress permanently funded the LWCF at \$900 million per year with wide bipartisan support through the Great American Outdoors Act, which was signed four years ago this week.

At no cost to taxpayers, the LWCF, administered by the National Park Service (NPS), supports increased public access to and protection for federal public lands and waters — including national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and recreation areas — and provides matching grants to Tribal, state and local governments to support the acquisition and development of land for public parks and other outdoor recreation sites.

“Communities in every corner of the nation have benefited from the Land and Water Conservation Fund’s incredible investments,” said National Park Service Director Chuck Sams. “With increased investment into locally led efforts, the Land and Water Conservation Fund continues to represent the best of America while putting communities and equity first.”

Allocations within the LWCF Stateside Assistance Program for each state and territory are determined through a formula set in the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act and is largely population-based. States and Territories further allocate these funds to local projects. This fiscal year, NPS [provided guidance](#) to states to work more closely with Tribes and underserved communities during the development of their Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans.

Fiscal Year 2024 Total Apportionments by State/Territory

Alabama — \$4,836,940	Maryland — \$6,039,654	Rhode Island — \$3,003,631
Alaska — \$2,707,692	Massachusetts — \$6,697,487	South Carolina — \$5,073,885
Arizona — \$6,721,366	Michigan — \$7,942,818	South Dakota — \$2,763,690
Arkansas — \$3,804,481	Minnesota — \$5,471,584	Tennessee — \$5,994,729
California — \$27,358,194	Mississippi — \$3,680,948	Texas — \$19,664,051
Colorado — \$5,805,360	Missouri — \$5,665,226	Utah — \$4,340,175
Connecticut — \$4,500,235	Montana — \$2,847,263	Vermont — \$2,590,576
Delaware — \$2,906,499	Nebraska — \$3,412,264	Virginia — \$7,203,951
Florida — \$15,748,651	Nevada — \$4,285,734	Washington — \$6,896,599
Georgia — \$8,319,854	New Hampshire — \$3,014,050	West Virginia — \$3,134,221
Hawaii — \$3,199,750	New Jersey — \$8,187,202	Wisconsin — \$5,472,290
Idaho — \$3,319,060	New Mexico — \$3,510,885	Wyoming — \$2,619,209
Illinois — \$10,094,573	New York — \$14,615,239	District of Columbia — \$2,772,503
Indiana — \$6,049,934	North Carolina — \$7,888,541	Puerto Rico — \$4,373,962
Iowa — \$3,981,511	North Dakota — \$2,720,637	Virgin Islands — \$2,376,883
Kansas — \$3,947,712	Ohio — \$9,023,861	Guam — \$2,415,903
Kentucky — \$4,593,101	Oklahoma — \$4,402,761	American Samoa — \$2,349,568
Louisiana — \$4,886,948	Oregon — \$4,793,191	Northern Marianas — \$2,348,610
Maine — \$2,908,994	Pennsylvania — \$9,715,364	Total — \$325,000,000

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.



Forest Service News: The Chief of the Forest Service has been questioned at recent hearings and has now been formally requested for an explanation on the Forest Service's push to change how it measures success in preparing forests for wildfire.

Forest Service Chief Randy Moore has told lawmakers he doesn't think thinning more acreage, by cutting vegetation or lighting prescribed fires or both, is necessarily the best way to show the Forest Service's progress on that front. What works better in Moore's view is treating the right acres in the right places.

Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), called the idea "ridiculous" at a recent hearing. He accused the Forest Service of changing the metric to skirt responsibility for treating fewer acres in national forests. House appropriators are demanding additional information on what Moore means, putting that request in the report language accompanying the fiscal 2025 Interior spending bill.

Conflict Brewing Over White National Forest Logging, New Hampshire

The White Mountain National Forest, in New Hampshire, has advertised a timber sale, causing environmental groups that are weighing their options to stop or modify the project.

It involves timber harvesting/cutting in three areas of the White Mountain National Forest totaling about 638 acres and two controlled burns on about 300 acres.

Editor's Note: Controlling wildfires has to include planned systematic removal of adult trees and controlled burns to remove downed fuel and brush. Further this also insures a healthy renewable resource. It appears these groups, who do not historically live in the area and would not be subject to losing their farms, homes and possessions caused by a fire, do not understand the science of timber management at all.

Wildfires: Fires burning in California, Oregon, Arizona, Washington state and other Western states, as well as Canada, have filled the skies in regions of the western U.S. with smoke and haze, forcing some affected areas to declare air quality alerts or advisories.

As of Wednesday morning, there were 79 large active wildfires across the country being managed that have burned 1,431,460 acres, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

Editor's note: Our Oregon QUWF Chapter chairman and state leader of the coop project area, had the wildlife come to the edge of his driveway in what is now over 110,000 acres burned. His home and ranch were saved by the herculean efforts of local fire departments.



Apply now for Wyoming Preference Points

Dreaming of an epic Wyoming hunt? Apply now for preference points. Resident and nonresident hunters can build points for moose and bighorn sheep, and nonresidents can acquire elk, deer and antelope points. All applications must be submitted online through the Wyoming Game and Fish Department [website](#).

"Preference points can help increase odds of drawing some species and hunt areas," said Josh Moulton, Game and Fish license section manager. "Drawing odds for all species and hunt areas are available on the [Game and Fish website](#)."

Hunters must purchase a preference point for a species for two consecutive years to maintain their totals and avoid losing points. Residents who were unsuccessful in their 2024 moose or bighorn sheep applications were automatically awarded a point. Only one point can be acquired per species annually.



More quail released around Shelter Island

By Susan Carey Dempsey — Building on successful grassroots efforts of the past few years, the Clark family and others recently got together to purchase and release approximately 1,000 quail (small bobwhites) around Shelter Island.

Although these birds are released on specific properties all over the Island, they will tend to migrate to surrounding areas as well. These are young quail that may be just a couple of months old, but they can fly. They seem to break off into smaller groups and you can find them feeding in a wide variety of habitats.

This is the third year that quail have been released, joining some of their fellow quail that were released and survived during the past two years. There is also evidence that there has been some limited success pertaining to the breeding of quail released prior to this summer.

Voracious consumers of ticks, the little birds were once a familiar sight on the Island, but their numbers have dwindled. Islanders may recall their distinctive bobwhite call, now rarely heard as predators and destruction of their natural habitats have taken their toll.

Islanders including Sean Clark, Dan Clark, Ben Smith and others had been discussing the idea for years, and in 2022 developed a plan of action. Sean is an officer in the Shelter Island Police Department; his cousin Dan runs the DC Tree business and is a member of the Town's Conservation Advisory Council.

Ben Smith, who runs Island Exterior Cleaning, initially reached out to Ranger Eric Powers, a biologist at the Center for Environmental Education and Discovery (CEED) in Brookhaven, a nature center that provides public nature programs and events, school and community-based environmental education and conservation projects. CEED aims to create a sustainable population of Northern Bobwhite Quail on Long Island once again.

According to Kenn Kaufman's *Birds of North America*, the male quail "whistle their name from fence posts, low branches ... small flocks (coveys) run on the ground, hide in dense grass of brushy fields, open woods."

"I remember as a child in the 90s," Sean Clark said when the project was launched, "I saw little coveys around, but there's been a significant decline in the quail population, principally from the loss of habitat. There are more houses going up, less open fields."

Shelter Island's Bobwhite Initiative has the following goals:

- Restore and maintain bobwhite populations in line with natural carrying capacity.
- Encourage best land management practices to improve early "successional habitat."
- Decrease the proliferation of ticks and associated tick-borne illnesses through natural means.

"Our next phase will specifically focus on education and spreading best land management practices," said Sean Clark.

Ticks are a long-standing concern on the Island because of the diseases they carry, like Lyme and babesiosis, infecting Islanders at high rates, often with debilitating long-term effects.

Using the quail to reduce ticks also aims at cutting down the reliance on pesticides, Mr. Clark explained. In recent years, he added, the numbers of fox on the Island have been down, as a result of mange. Since they would typically be predators for quail, now seems an opportune time to re-introduce the birds.



Sean Clark with his sons, Colton 8, and Chase, 5, and standing, Brendan Colligan, 5, releasing quail in Silver Beach in June 2023. A new batch of the birds has recently been released into the wild. (Credit: Jim Colligan)

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Continued from Page 28 — Quail are not hardy like chickens, he said. Instead of raising them from eggs or chicks, the Shelter Island initiative purchases adult birds, which are more expensive, to increase their chance of survival. When the project was launched, the plan was to place them on private land with owners' permission. Dan Clark planned to request use of Town lands when appropriate. Silver Beach, Hay Beach and the Ram Island causeway were also promising sites.

Quail have a short life span and typically a 10% natural survival rate. One of the challenges for the initiative is reducing the risk to the quail from predators. One observer saw a red-tailed hawk swoop down after some quail in Westmoreland recently — it was successfully fought off by a crow that time. But other dangers lurk closer to home.

“House cats are a huge predator for them,” Mr. Clark said. Part of the focus is on community education, for example, encouraging pet owners to keep their cats indoors at night.

Also, it's important for drivers to be especially careful when driving around the Island. A statement from the quail project's organizers said: “We all need to be aware of both humans and wildlife that are utilizing the roadways and surrounding areas. We certainly do not want to see any accidents involving bikers, joggers, walkers, or other drivers. But we also do not want to accidentally hit a turtle, quail or other bird, deer, or any wildlife for that matter. Please lower your speed and give your full attention to the road — it is sometimes not easy to spot a small turtle or bird in the road.”

Shelter Island and the Silver beach area are located in Southern New York.



The Northern Bobwhite Quail, once a familiar sight on the Island, has been re-introduced in hopes of controlling ticks. (Courtesy photo)

NSSF welcomes USFWS expanded hunting

NSSF®, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, welcomes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) announcement that more opportunities will be opened for sportsmen and women to hunt and fish on National Wildlife Refuges (NWR). The **USFWS announced** that 53 new hunting and fishing opportunities across 211,000 acres on 12 NWRs are being added to the 400 existing NWRs and 35 wetland management areas where hunting and fishing opportunities already exist.

“This announcement of more and expanded hunting opportunities on National Wildlife Refuges is an accomplishment all the firearm industry celebrates, along with all outdoorsmen and women,” said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF Senior Vice President & General Counsel. “It has long been the goal that hunting opportunities should be opened on public lands and made available to the public. They are the public land owners and the ones who are vested in seeing these hunting opportunities benefit sustainable wildlife conservation. The firearm industry is particularly proud of the conservation investment made by firearm and ammunition manufacturers through the federal firearm and ammunition excise taxes that are the primary driver of wildlife conservation in America.”

NSSF welcomes USFWS's **recent announcement** embracing voluntary pilot programs to educate hunters about alternative ammunition options for hunting. Hunters and recreational marksmen should be free to choose the ammunition that will best serve their needs for ethical and efficient harvesting of wildlife. NSSF is disappointed, however, that today's opening of additional big game hunting opportunities will restrict the use of traditional ammunition. Wildlife management decisions should be based on sound scientific field data. Restrictions on the use of traditional ammunition should only be imposed where the sound science establishes a wildlife population decline caused by hunters' use of traditional ammunition and there is no other less-costly remedial measure available to effectively address the issue.

NSSF[®]
The Firearm Industry
Trade Association

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Continued from Page 29 — Today’s “Hunt-Fish” rule does not set forth such science that would justify restricting the use of traditional ammunition on the newly opened big game opportunities.

NSSF is proud that the firearm and ammunition industry has **invested over \$27.38 billion**, when adjusted for inflation, to wildlife conservation in America since 1937 through the Pittman-Robertson federal firearm and ammunition excise taxes. These taxes, paid by the manufacturers, are dedicated solely for the conservation of wildlife, the habitats in which they thrive, hunter education and construction of new, or expansion of existing recreational target shooting ranges to promote safe and responsible firearms skills, handling and ownership. These 10 to 11 percent excise tax dollars collected for the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act are specifically designated to be used by state wildlife agencies for conservation and related purposes. Collectively, purchasers of firearms and ammunition, hunters and the industry are the greatest source of wildlife conservation funding.

In 2024, USFWS apportioned over \$1.6 billion to the states for wildlife conservation projects, of which **\$944 million** was sourced from Pittman-Robertson excise taxes paid by firearm and ammunition manufacturers.

NRA offers financial support to Hunters for the Hungry

***Editor’s Note:** We, along with many in the industry, followed the upheaval of the NRA and its former leadership. After the dust has settled, it appears the organization is getting back to its core values with totally new leadership and will once again represent the sportsman and women who value our heritage of the outdoors and not abuse the financial framework.*

The NRA Hunters’ Leadership Forum (HLF) is pleased to announce that \$100,000 will be available in 2024 for the Hunters for the Hungry (HFH) subsidy program. Hunters for the Hungry is an initiative supported by the National Rifle Association to give back to communities by supplying thousands of meals to the needy throughout the country. The NRA works closely with state programs/affiliates to put interested individuals in touch with programs in their area and foster public awareness through education, fundraising, and publicity. Since the program’s inception, Hunters for the Hungry has brought millions of pounds of venison to homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and food banks across the United States.



“I want to thank the generous donors that have made this opportunity available, which allows the Hunters’ Leadership Forum to be able to support this very worthy cause,” said Peter Churchbourne, Managing Director of the NRA Hunters’ Leadership Forum and NRA Hunting Division. “Hunting as a food source is very important to so many families in the United States and we are honored to be a part of that process.”

Subsidy payments, up to \$2,000 each, are available to established Hunters for the Hungry programs. Awarded subsidies are available immediately and can be applied for at <https://hfth.nra.org/hfh-subsidy/>.

There are approximately 40 unique Hunters for the Hungry/Hunters Sharing the Harvest groups working in the United States that operate on shoestring budgets trying to get donated game meat from the field to a butcher and then onto to those that need it. The NRA encourages hunters to donate to those programs both financially and through the donation of harvested game meat. To find where you can donate meat in your area, visit <http://hfth.nra.org>.

BLM seeks nominations for lands to prioritize for access

Are you aware of BLM lands that should be prioritized for recreational opportunities? If so, the BLM is seeking input from the public on lands that “should be made more accessible for recreation.”

The Bureau of Land Management is seeking additional input on public lands that should be made more accessible for recreation. Under the [Dingell Act](#), the Department of the Interior is directed to ask for the public’s help nominating public lands that are ideal places to hunt, fish, ride, hike, or play, but that have little or no existing public access. The American public responded with enthusiasm in the first round of nominations, submitting more than 6,000 suggestions since 2020.

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Continued from Page 30 — “Americans love public lands and deserve access to them,” said BLM Director Tracy Stone-Manning. “We are grateful that thousands of passionate people on the ground are guiding BLM in our work to unlock access for hunting, fishing, and recreation.”

Lands nominated for the BLM Dingell Act Priority Access:

- Must be managed by the BLM
- Encompass at least 640 contiguous acres
- Have restricted or no public access

BLM would then attempt to improve access to these lands through the application of easements, rights-of-way, or land purchases from willing sellers. The agency considers the likelihood of resolving access issues before submitting nominations to Congress for funding consideration.

The BLM has created a [portal](#) for nominations. Nominations must include the location, total acreage affected (if known), a description or narrative describing the lack of access, and any additional information the BLM should consider.

The agency will not include personal identifying information concerning owners or ownership of any nominated parcels in preparing the priority access list or related congressional reports.

FWP releases 2023 wolf report, population strong

The wolf population in Montana remains healthy, according to the 2023 Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Wolf Report. Increased harvest during the 2023 wolf season has not yet resulted in an estimated decline to the statewide total. However, FWP biologists expect to see a moderate decline in wolf numbers next year resulting from the increased harvest in early 2024.

“We are committed to following the law to reduce wolf numbers to a sustainable level, which means ensuring Montana has a healthy state managed population,” said Quentin Kujala, FWP Chief of Conservation Policy. “The statewide wolf population estimate for calendar year 2023 is approximately 1,100 wolves, similar to 2022. However, we are seeing declines in the estimated number of wolves and wolf packs in Regions 3 and 4, which suggests the combination of hunting, trapping, and conflict management removals can effectively reduce wolf numbers.”

An example of this moderate decline is in FWP Region 3, where wolf population estimates have gradually declined from 214 in 2020, to 178 in 2023. Statewide, wolf harvest from Jan. 1 through March 15 was 176 wolves in 2024, compared to 144 over the same period in 2023. Both trends indicate a moderate decline in wolf numbers FWP biologists expect to be illustrated in the 2024 wolf report that will come out during the summer of 2025.



The estimated statewide wolf population for 2023 was 1,096, just one less than the 2022 estimated population and slightly below the 10-year average of 1,140 wolves but well above recovery thresholds. The number of wolf packs was 181, spread over 66,000 square miles. Total wolf harvest for the 2023-2024 wolf season was 286 wolves, which was an increase from 258 taken during the 2022-23 season.

Livestock conflicts, confirmed livestock losses and wolf removals were all down considerably in 2023, according to the report. Wildlife Services confirmed the loss of 32 livestock to wolves, including 23 cattle and eight sheep; one livestock guard dog was also killed by wolves. This total was lower than numbers from 2012 to 2022.

“Moving forward with proposed wolf regulations, we will continue to provide the Fish and Wildlife Commission with our best science and lessons learned from Montana wolf management to date,” Kujala said.

At the Aug. 16 Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting, FWP will propose wolf and furbearer regulations for the 2024/2025 seasons. The proposed total wolf harvest quota is 334 wolves, up from 313 for the 2023 season.

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Continued from Page 31 — The Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission will review and make a final decision on the proposed furbearer and wolf trapping and hunting seasons at its Aug. 16 meeting, except wolf trapping dates and where they will apply. Those will be decided by the commission at its October meeting.

The annual wolf report can be found on FWP’s website at: [final-2023-wolf-report.pdf \(mt.gov\)](https://www.fwp.mt.gov/final-2023-wolf-report.pdf)



In Case You Missed This: Quebec-based Taiga Motors (TAIG), manufacturer of fully electric snowmobiles & PWC's, has filed for bankruptcy. The July 11th filing was widely expected coming 3 months after Taiga Motors halted its vehicle production and let go most of its workforce.

So far this year, over 28,000 wildfires have burned more than 4.5 million acres in the United States, according to the National Interagency Fire Center.

U.S. fire activity for 2024 is above the average for the last decade, agency data shows, and the resulting destruction has already amounted to more than what burned in all of 2023. The expected peak of this year’s fire season still at least a month away.

Happy Birthday Smokey Bear: Since his birthday August 9, 1944, Smokey Bear has been a recognized symbol of conservation and protection of America’s forests. His message about wildfire prevention has dramatically helped to reduce the number of acres lost annually to wildfires.

However, wildfire prevention remains one of the most critical issues affecting our country. Many Americans believe that lightning starts most wildfires, but in fact, most wildfires nationwide are caused by humans. In recent years, approximately 80% of wildfires are caused by humans - most often unattended campfires, debris burning, children, and careless disposal of smoking materials cause the start of fires.

Smokey Bear’s birthday is a great reminder that wildfire prevention is important to the health and the future of Forests. For 80 years, Smokey Bear’s message has reminded us that we all have an important role to play to ensure future generations can enjoy the special role our beloved national forests play in providing all Americans with clean water, air, and a place to relax and escape the pressures of modern life.”

Happy 80th Birthday Smokey Bear! Only you can prevent forest fires!

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