

QUAIL



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:
Vote, vote, vote, and more



The most important responsibility we have as citizens of this country is to vote.

The criticality of this upcoming election to our republic, I think, is the most important one since our very founding. There are forces trying to change the very fabric of our nation. This requires every person who can, get out and vote.

Every sportsman, veteran, or person of any religious denomination who are citizens of this country need to get out and **VOTE** November 5.

We as a nation, cannot sustain the destruction of our ability to own homes, feed our families or enjoy the right.

Talk to your friends, neighbors and community members. Get them out to **VOTE!**

- Craig Alderman



By Craig Alderman — Part 1: VOTE, VOTE, VOTE; Then, get every sportsman you know, veterans, family members and friends out to vote. It is that important.

Part 2: A special thanks to two chapters in North Carolina (NC) who joined with this office and our family to provide \$6,000.00 to date, of support for those affected in Hurricane Helene. Yadkin Valley and Johnston County stepped up!

I have a personal friend who lost her home, truck, boat, and all possessions. She immediately began reaching out to all to get supplies for all families and helping organize the receipt, storage and distribution to the affected areas. That's what Americans do!

Recommendations from several sources were that one organization was going above and beyond — **Samaritan's Purse**, managed by Reverend Graham, is also located in NC. Support was also given to the food banks.

Part 3: Just a quick note or two about getting ready for winter to come blasting in. As I write this, in central Missouri it is 80 degrees with a strong 20 to 25 mph wind further aggravating the severe drought we are in. The ground is hard as a rock, and the grass, brush and fields are tinder dry.

Be so careful if you are hunting in these conditions. No fires in these conditions — don't flick cigarettes, be careful. BUT, we know it will change and from this late date, dramatically fast.

For the farm or ranch, get ready for the cold. Pull all hoses, drain them, and close off the faucets. I put insulated covers on all as a further protection. Get your chemicals and liquids stored in a heated place — that includes paints, glues, etc.

Get all your tool batteries and chargers into warm storage. I use food service trays, ya know, the ones you see them gathering dirty dishes with in restaurants to put them in, just in case there is a leak or two. Freezing temps will kill them quick.

Check all your car, truck, tractor ATV, RTV, side by side batteries for good fluid levels, adding only distilled water if needed.

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Continued from Page 1 — Change over to winterized windshield washer fluid. Get your supply of diesel fuel treatment ready. If it goes below 10 degrees, put it in the tank before you try and start it, every time not just once.

I put low amperage stabilization chargers on all batteries for the z-mower, dozer, stored tractors and ATV. The number 1 failure for hunters is getting the ATV ready with a weak or dead battery. Keep it charged or replace it before you go to deer camp.

Enjoy the fall hunt with family and friends. *Deer Camp is a special gathering that needs to be preserved.*

Catch you across the dry creek.

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

New program adds 12,000 acres of AR wetlands

Nearly 12,000 additional acres of wetlands will greet waterfowl in The Natural State this winter, thanks to the successful implementation of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's Conservation Incentive Program.

The program was funded through special set-aside funds by the Arkansas General Assembly. Throughout spring and summer, AGFC staff worked with private landowners to offer \$3.5 million in incentives to help improve wildlife habitat on their property. The initiative was developed similar to many cost-share conservation incentives provided through Farm Bill programs, but is targeted specifically at wildlife and fisheries needs in Arkansas on a state level.

Two of the nine practices comprising the initiative focused on open wetland habitat, and another incentivized forest management on private greentree reservoirs.

According to Randy Brents, Assistant Chief of the AGFC Private Lands Habitat Division, roughly 11,871 acres of land has been placed under contracts to enhance habitat for waterfowl this winter. Many of these acres may have been tilled early or left dry during the migration if not for the incentive.

“We have contracted with farmers to flood 10,961 acres of rice fields using surface water sources during a 90-day portion of the waterfowl wintering period, and none of those acres will be tilled, leaving as much waste grain as possible for ducks and geese,” Brents said. “Another 910 acres of native wetland plants will be flooded that can offer even more benefit to waterfowl and other migratory species.”

According to Brents, 127 landowners signed up to implement the flooded rice and wetland practices.

“Those are all acres that are above and beyond what normally would be contracted by other programs,” Brents said. “One of our requirements was that the land couldn't be enrolled in another cost-share or incentive that paid for flooding.”

Brents said this boom in additional acreage is only a portion of the wetlands being provided by the AGFC and other agencies. The AGFC will fund nearly 16,000 acres of wetlands on private land this season.

“We have another 4,000-plus acres in the Waterfowl Rice Incentive Conservation Enhancement Program this winter that promotes flooded rice fields with an additional caveat that landowners allow some limited public hunting through a permit-based draw system,” Brents said. “And this year, thanks to the federal Migratory Bird Resurgence Initiative, an additional 29,946 acres are enrolled in federal programs to promote wetlands in the state for wildlife benefits. Our private lands biologists have been working hard with landowners to apply for these incentives as well.”



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Continued from Page 2 — Garrick Dugger, Private Lands Habitat Division Chief, says the vision of this new initiative is simple: “You don’t manage wildlife in a bubble. Whether it’s private or public land, the success of wildlife habitat management depends on the land surrounding you, not just what you control. Even if we manage the public land absolutely perfect, we’re only affecting 10 percent of Arkansas’s land, the rest is up to private landowners, so we want to help with their efforts as well.”

Dugger said the connection between private and public land management is most obvious in migrating birds like waterfowl.

“We know that it takes wetland habitat on a landscape level to provide energy for migrating ducks and geese,” Dugger said. “Even if all of the public land in Arkansas is flooded and full of food, it’s only a fraction of the habitat needed to draw ducks to Arkansas and give them the nutrition they need during and after migration. Private land accounts for so much more of our state’s landmass, and it’s the actions of those landowners that play a pivotal role in wildlife management for us all. If rice fields aren’t wet, hunters everywhere notice it in empty skies and empty game straps.”

The Conservation Incentive Program is an undertaking by the AGFC’s Private Lands Habitat Division and is made possible by Greenway Equipment.

QUWF celebrates MO bob white quail designation

More often the dedicated people at the local level can make a difference. This is the historical case in Missouri. Sixteen years ago, on October 8, the two co-founders of the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, Inc., Craig Alderman and Chief Biologist Nick Prough who on October 8, 2008, witnessed the personal efforts to bring the iconic bob white quail into the public’s eye.

“Nick and I were very proud to help originate and propose the bill and to be with then Governor Matt Blunt who signed House Bill No. 576 section 10.012, “The “bobwhite quail” (*Colinus virginianus*) is selected for and shall be known as the official game bird of the State of Missouri.”

“The bobwhite quail is a very unique biological, biblical and political species. Biologically it takes a serious concentration at the very local level, “turnin-the-dirt” to sustain its need for a successional environment, the habitat work is never ending; The bobwhite is the only species mentioned in the Bible, used to feed many; and finally, it is the only species in the farm bill that focuses on extra dollars to provide and maintain its existence with and for private landowners,” explains Craig.

“We have to bring the bob white the forefront, the efforts needed to sustain this iconic species are immense and ongoing and by declaring it as the state game bird, it elevates the importance,” states Nick Prough of QUWF. “Landowners do not need more coaches, they need the programs to get the biological work done on the ground, and that is what we do with muddy boots, chainsaws and endless boots on the ground. We are proud that our landowner relationships now span decades and we are dedicated to their wildlife successes across this nation.”



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.

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NSSF opposes proposal to close parts of Bear Ears

NSSF®, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, strongly opposes Interior Secretary Deb Haaland's [proposed plan](#) for the Department of the Interior [to shutter access](#) to recreational shooting on 1.3 million acres of the Bears Ears National Monument, in Utah. Today's announcement will needlessly deny recreational target shooters access to the monument for no legally justifiable purpose and will violate federal law.

"Secretary Haaland's proposed plan to close access to 1.3 million acres for recreational shooting is a violation of federal law," said Joe Bartozzi, NSSF President and Chief Executive Officer. "Public lands must be made available for all the public to use. Federal law explicitly states that when closures of public lands are necessary, they must be limited in area and duration to achieve a specific stated objective. Secretary Haaland has articulated none of the required criteria, as required by law. The Secretary should rescind or drastically modify this misguided policy and apply the law as intended: to benefit the public."

The John D. Dingell, Jr., Conservation, Management, and

Recreation Act, which was signed into law in 2019, sets the criteria upon which the Secretary of the Department of the Interior may close public access to public lands. The law limits the area and duration for when public access to federal lands may be closed. Closures may only occur when a clear and quantifiable objective is identified. Secretary Haaland's announcement to close 1.3 million acres to Bears Ears National Monument fails to meet these requirements.

The Dingell Act states that federal lands will remain open to hunting, fishing and recreational shooting in accordance with applicable law. That is, unless the Secretary establishes that a specific area must be closed for one or more particular reasons, including public safety, administration or compliance with applicable laws. If that is to occur, the Secretary must limit the closure to the smallest area necessary and for the shortest amount of time to achieve the stated purpose.

None of these criteria were met before Secretary Haaland announced that public access will be denied to countless recreational shooters who, since the land is public, own those lands. The announcement will deny access in a manner detrimental to conservation funding. What is most appalling is that this punitive political action is occurring despite the absence of any indication that recreational shooters pose an any viable threat to the monument's cultural, historic or natural resources.

"NSSF is deeply troubled by this blatant violation of the law to close off access to 1.3 million acres of public land," Bartozzi added. "This unlawful closure demonstrates that the Biden-Harris administration and Secretary Haaland are openly hostile to the interests of America's sportsmen and women. This action clearly shows utter disdain for the rule of law. NSSF will protest this proposal and will work with the Bureau of Land Management to ensure future shooting opportunities in the Monument remain available to recreational target shooters."



Temporary campfire ban in effect at all parks

Editor's Note: The extremely dry conditions over the entire mid-west need to be top of mind if you hunt these states. The fire danger is very high and does require sportsman being especially careful with any fire sources, smoking and monitor the conditions and wind.

The Nebraska Game and Parks is implementing a temporary ban on campfires at all Nebraska state park areas and wildlife management areas until further notice.

Camp stoves using liquid or gas fuel are permitted as they reduce the likelihood of ash or hot charcoal being discarded before they are extinguished. These types of stoves also do not produce blowing embers, further reducing wildfire potential.

Campground and WMA visitors should be mindful of changing conditions.

Stay tuned to local emergency managers and fire departments for any potential regional fire ban updates.

With dry conditions in mind, Game and Parks urges people to take the following precautions to avoid the risk of wildfire:

- Restrict driving to established roads and trails.
- Avoid parking vehicles in tall vegetation.
- Dispose of cigarettes and other flammable objects appropriately.
- Ensure your vehicle, trailers and other equipment are well-maintained.
- Make sure no chains are dragging from your vehicle.
- In the morning, before driving and while the exhaust/catalytic converter system is cool, inspect it to see no debris is clinging to it.
- Carry a fire extinguisher in the vehicle.

Find park contact information at OutdoorNebraska.gov.



Rare Canada lynx sightings continue in Vermont

After [a rare Canada lynx was confirmed in Vermont last August](#) for the first time in years, biologists with the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department have continued to receive verifiable photos and videos of what they believe is the same individual wild cat.

Reports indicate that the lynx has moved about 60 miles north of where it was first sighted in Rutland County into Addison County, traveling around a dozen miles at a time and then staying in the same general area for several days before moving on. Juvenile lynx will often travel long distances searching for new territory, a behavior called "dispersal" by biologists.

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Continued from Page 6 — “We’ve had 15 confirmed lynx sightings since August and signs point to these all being the same dispersing juvenile male,” said Brehan Furfey, furbearer biologist with the department. “The lynx has moved steadily north from Rutland County into Addison County. That’s a conservation success in its own right because Vermont’s network of protected lands is what makes this journey possible. We’re rooting for this lynx to keep heading north where it will find more young forest habitat and plenty of snowshoe hares to eat.”

Because Canada lynx are a federally threatened species, the department says it is important for anyone who sees a lynx to give the cat a respectful amount of space. The individual lynx currently being seen by Vermonters appears skinny but healthy and is not a threat to people. However, it is probably stressed by being in unfamiliar habitat and needs to be allowed to continue its dispersal without disturbance.

“The rule of thumb is always to keep a respectful distance from any wildlife you’re observing. If they are changing their behavior in response to you, then you’re too close,” said Furfey. “Keeping a respectful distance is especially important for threatened or endangered species like Canada lynx which are protected by state and federal law. That said, we do want your photos or videos if you think you have crossed paths with a lynx and are able to get a clear view on your phone or camera without disturbing it.”

Vermonters who think they have a photo or video of a lynx are encouraged to take two steps. First, [learn how to tell Canada lynx from the closely related bobcat](#), which is much more common in Vermont. Second, if confident your photo or video is a lynx, email it to the department at fwinformation@vermont.gov.

“The chance to use citizen science observations to follow this juvenile lynx on its search for new territory is really unusual and really exciting,” said Furfey. “Vermonters can be proud that decades of land protection and management for connected habitats have allowed this rare wild cat to make its way through our state. It’s a sign that conservation is working.”

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Continued from Page 7 — The tags can be selectively programmed to open this safe and any other RAPiD® Safe you own.

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Epizootic hemorrhagic disease confirmed in 11 MI counties

Since early September, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Health Section has confirmed epizootic hemorrhagic disease, or EHD, in the wild deer population across 11 counties in southwest Michigan. The affected counties include Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Hillsdale, Kalamazoo, Kent, Ottawa, St. Joseph and Van Buren.

EHD, a common viral disease that primarily affects white-tailed deer, is transmitted through the bite of an infected midge, or biting fly. Deer cannot transmit the disease directly to one another; the virus must pass through the insect. Outbreaks of EHD typically occur in late summer and early fall but cease with the first frost, which kills the midge population.

Infected deer exhibit symptoms such as loss of appetite, reduced fear of humans, weakness, excessive salivation, rapid pulse, increased respiration and fever.

They may also seek out water to cool their elevated body temperatures. In severe cases, the disease leads to unconsciousness and death.

“EHD is not expected to have widespread deer population-level impacts, but it can significantly affect localized areas if mortality is severe,” said Chad Fedewa, acting deer specialist for the DNR Wildlife Division.

“After an outbreak, local deer populations usually rebound after a few years. That has been the case over the last decade or so each time we have seen this virus show up.”



CWD testing in northern lower and upper peninsulas

Editor's Note: CWD continues to expand and all hunters in all areas and all states need to check with the changing regulations regarding deer taken in CWD zones in the state or states you are hunting in. Pay attention to your states efforts to stop the "Source" of CWD, and it is not hunters with bait piles or lures.

This year, chronic wasting disease testing will still be focused in some areas of the northern Lower Peninsula as well as the Upper Peninsula. The counties for CWD testing in 2024 include Antrim, Arenac, Baraga, Benzie, Cheboygan, Chippewa, Clare, Dickinson, Gladwin, Grand Traverse, Houghton, Iosco, Kalkaska, Keweenaw, Leelanau, Luce, Mackinac, Manistee, Ogemaw, Ontonagon, Otsego and Schoolcraft.

In these counties, a variety of sites will be popping up with at least one of the following depending on the county: drop boxes, staffed submission sites, and partner processors and taxidermists to assist with collection efforts. To find out about available sites near where you hunt, see the [CWD testing page](#).

Historically, testing has occurred in and around areas where CWD has been detected to date.

Starting in 2021, the DNR began a rotational approach to testing for CWD around the state. With this approach, a group of counties is selected each year, with a desire to eventually test sufficient numbers of deer in every county across the state. This has led to detection of CWD in 13 of Michigan's 83 counties, with Ogemaw being the latest in the fall of 2023.

The goal of this approach is early disease detection, as management has the potential to be most effective when the disease is caught early. Most of these areas have not had a CWD detection or have not previously been part of intensive testing efforts, so little is known about disease status in these locations. To date, we have collected enough baseline information in 61 of our 83 counties and are conducting surveillance in the remaining 22 counties to meet the baseline information needs in these areas.

For more on where CWD has been found, see the [County-level CWD detection information page](#).



NSSF-adjusted NICS background checks for Sept.

The [September 2024 NSSF-adjusted National Instant Criminal Background Check System \(NICS\)](#) figure of 1,156,223 is an increase of 1.3 percent compared to the [September 2023 NSSF-adjusted NICS figure](#) of 1,141,847.

For comparison, the unadjusted September 2024 FBI NICS figure of 2,072,550 reflects a 1.8% percent increase from the unadjusted FBI NICS figure of 2,035,410 in September 2023.

September 2024 marks the 62nd month in a row that has exceeded 1 million adjusted background checks in a single month.

The third quarter 2024 NSSF-adjusted National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) figure of 3,432,008 reflects an increase of 4.5 percent as compared to the third quarter 2023 figure of 3,283,571.

Please note: [Twenty-four states](#) currently have at least one qualified alternative permit, which under the Brady Act allows the permit-holder, who has undergone a background check to obtain the permit, to purchase a firearm from a licensed dealer without a separate additional background check for that transfer. The number of NICS checks in these states does not include these legal transfers based on qualifying permits and NSSF does not adjust for these transfers.

The [adjusted NICS data](#) were derived by subtracting out NICS purpose code permit checks and permit rechecks used by states for CCW permit application checks as well as checks on active CCW permit databases. NSSF started subtracting permit rechecks in February 2016.

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Continued from Page 9 — Though not a direct correlation to firearms sales, the NSSF-adjusted NICS data provide an additional picture of current market conditions. In addition to other purposes, NICS is used to check transactions for sales or transfers of new or used firearms.

It should be noted that these statistics represent the number of firearm background checks initiated through the NICS. They do not represent the number of firearms sold or sales dollars. Based on varying state laws, local market conditions and purchase scenarios, a one-to-one correlation cannot be made between a firearm background check and a firearm sale.

For additional information on NICS or to view a complete set of the current monthly reports, please visit the [NICS website](https://www.nssf.org/nics).

Questions concerning NSSF-adjusted NICS data should be directed to NSSF at 203-426-1320 or research@nssf.org. Additional research is available at [nssf.org/research](https://www.nssf.org/research). NSSF members are able to access historical monthly NICS data by [logging in](#) and clicking on "Industry Research" then "NICS data."



Ohio's 2024 wild turkey hatch results

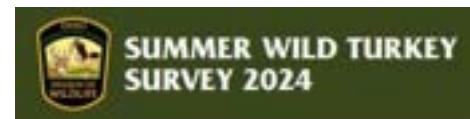
Ohio's wild turkey poult index, a metric used to estimate nest success and poult survival for the bird, was slightly above the 10-year average at 2.9 poult per hen in 2024, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife.

The Division of Wildlife relies on public reports of wild turkeys and their young, called poults, in July and August of each year to estimate nest success and poult survival. The annual poult index can serve as an indicator of wild turkey population trends and inform harvest regulations in future years. Turkey brood success is largely influenced by weather conditions, habitat, and predation.

This is the fourth year in a row that Ohio's brood survey has been above average or slightly above average. Wild turkey brood surveys in 2021, 2022, and 2023 showed strong nest productivity that benefitted turkey populations. The statewide average poults per hen was 2.8 in 2023, 3.0 in 2022, and 3.1 in 2021. This year, the 10-year average increased from 2.7 to 2.8 poults per hen because of recent turkey nest success.

Turkey poult production varied slightly by region. In northeast and northwest Ohio, the index was 3.1 poults per hen. It was 2.8 in southeast and central Ohio, and 2.2 poults per hen in southwest Ohio. Because of habitat availability, Ohio's turkey populations are typically strongest in the eastern and southern counties. This year's survey results were based on 1,952 responses.

The restoration of the wild turkey in Ohio is among the state's most notable wildlife success stories. Wild turkeys were wiped out around 1904, and the Division of Wildlife began reintroducing wild turkeys to the Buckeye State in the 1950s. For the next five decades, the wild turkey population grew and expanded rapidly, facilitated by trap-and-transfer efforts. By 1999, wild turkeys were found in all 88 counties.



STATEWIDE SUMMARY
 RESPONSES: 1,952
 POULOTS PER HEN (PPH): 2.9
 POULOTS PER BROOD (PPB): 3.0
 HENS WITH BROOD (HWB): 74%



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Notes from the Road:

‘Timing is everything’ is true, even in habitat management



By Nick Prough — Many times you have to try to time your habitat management around many different factors, from extreme weather to existing habitat conditions, long-term weather patterns such as droughts, time availability, equipment availability, funding availability, and the list goes on and on.

That has never been truer of a case for many landowners this year on many different habitat projects I am working with this year — especially in the Midwest. Many of you remember all the springtime rains we had earlier this year where we were inundated with rain for month after month, leaving many habitat projects sitting deep in the mud or even worse, clearly underwater.

Then the light switch turned off in early July with yet another four-month extreme drought holding its grip on many areas of the Midwest, with some areas becoming historically dry for yet another straight fall season. I have specific native warm-season grass plantings that landowners couldn’t plant until late June or early July in MO and KS this year due to the extremely wet and muddy/flooded conditions on the landscape all spring and early summer, and then once they planted their field borders and buffers when they could finally get into the field, it has only rained on those seedings three total times in the past four months with some of those projects not getting one drop of rain the entire month of October thus far.

In fact, in western MO there are many counties that — with only a couple days of the month remaining as I sat down to write this column — have yet to receive any measurable rainfall in the entire month. So yet once again timing is everything, especially when it come to the weather and long-term weather patterns in order to try to maximize your habitat successes you are trying to have on your specific track of land and species you’re working on.

Then you have all the other factors and conditions mentioned above; you and others working on habitat this fall will have to take into account. That this habitat year has and looks to continue to be a challenge is definitely an understatement.

So, what do you do? Cancel the project? Wait for another year to pass? Normally, I say definitely not. You keep on keeping on ... you work through and around all the challenges that arise before, during, and after your habitat project begins, and you complete it best you can, and when humanly you can get it completed on the landscape you are working on. After all, I have yet to see a wildlife species come into any habitat project that has been completed and put up a protest sign or give it a failing grade because it simply wasn’t quite up to their standards of habitat created. Most often they will use the habitat created and adapt to their local conditions as well.

Keep in mind doing something, anything that creates a disturbance on the landscape to try to improve the habitat in some way, shape, or form is, most often than not, much better for most, if not all species than just letting a track of land sit idle and doing nothing for long periods of time. We often see that on many areas of the landscape older farms that have just sat idle for many years or even a decade and although a person might think it would be full of wildlife it is more often far from that case.

So once again, get out in the field this fall season and take a look at what has worked, what didn’t, and what could be improved on the various tracks of land you frequently visit and do something this fall season to improve them for the next phase of your habitat management efforts.

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, nest predator removal, 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.

Continued from Page 10 — Ohio's first modern day spring wild turkey hunting season opened in 1966 in nine counties, and hunters checked 12 birds. The total number of harvested turkeys topped 1,000 for the first time in 1984. Turkey hunting was opened statewide in 2000. The highest Ohio spring wild turkey harvest was in 2001, when hunters checked 26,156 birds.

Check the [2024-25 Hunting and Trapping Regulations](#) for more information on fall turkey hunting, game check, and license and permit requirements.



Ohio: Veterans invited to shoot for free Nov. 10

COLUMBUS, Ohio – In honor of Veterans Day, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife invites veterans to visit and shoot for free at one of Ohio's premier public shooting ranges on Sunday, Nov. 10. The shooting range permit requirement is waived for veterans on all [Division of Wildlife Class A, B, and C shooting ranges](#) for that day.

The ODNR Division of Wildlife is providing a free range day as a thank you to veterans for their service. Veterans can visit either the Delaware or Spring Valley class A ranges between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to get specialized instruction. A variety of firearms will be available to use at no charge. The addresses for both areas are as follows:

- Delaware Wildlife Area, 1110 State Route 229, Ashley 43003
- Spring Valley Wildlife Area, 3570 Houston Road, Waynesville 45068

On-site staff will provide equipment, ammunition, ear protection, and eye protection at these locations. The Division of Wildlife's honor guard will start the day with a flag ceremony at 9 a.m.

ODNR Division of Wildlife public shooting ranges provide comfortable, safe places to hone skills with rifles, shotguns, handguns, and archery equipment. A complete list of range facilities, and the amenities offered at each, can be found at wildohio.gov. Class A shooting ranges offer supervised rifle and pistol target shooting. Class B facilities offer unsupervised rifle and pistol target shooting, while Class C ranges host unsupervised clay target shotgun shooting.

All persons 18 and older shooting on Division of Wildlife Class A, B, or C ranges are required to purchase a shooting range permit.

The range permit requirement does not apply to veterans on Sunday, Nov. 10. Permits are available at all hunting and fishing license outlets, via the [Ohio Wildlife Licensing System](#), or on the [HuntFish OH mobile app](#). Daily permits are available for \$5. The annual permit is \$24.



**Department of
Natural Resources**

Chronic wasting disease detected in Flathead Valley

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) was recently detected in a white-tailed deer in Kalispell. This is the first time CWD has been detected in a wild herd in [Hunting District 170](#), which encompasses most of the Flathead Valley.

FWP received reports of a symptomatic buck at the Flathead County Landfill. Wildlife biologists euthanized the animal and submitted samples for testing. The first test indicated that the deer was positive for CWD and a second follow-up test has been submitted for confirmation, following testing protocol.

FWP is working with Flathead County and will survey the landfill for any other potentially symptomatic deer on the property.

CWD is a contagious neurological disease that infects members of the deer family, including elk, moose, mule deer, and white-tailed deer. It is always fatal, and there is no known cure. It was first detected in Montana's wild herds in 2017.

There is no known transmission of CWD to humans. However, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that hunters harvesting a deer, elk, or moose from an area where CWD is known to be present have their animal tested for CWD prior to consuming the meat and do not consume the meat if the animal tests positive.

Hunting is the primary tool for monitoring and managing the spread of CWD. Concerns over CWD shouldn't stop hunters from enjoying hunting season. Hunters are critical to conservation efforts across the state and protecting our wildlife heritage.

Following the latest detection, all hunters in HD 170 are encouraged to get their harvested deer and elk tested for CWD. Testing will aid FWP's assessment of CWD's potential prevalence in the Flathead Valley.

Hunters can bring their harvested animal to the FWP office in Kalispell, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. for sample collection during the general hunting season. Visit [FWP's website](#) for more details on how and where to get harvested animals tested.

Other CWD reminders:

- **Carcass disposal requirements:** Carcass parts, such as brain, eyes, spleen, lymph glands, and spinal cord material, should be left at the kill site when possible. If the animal is transported for taxidermy or meat processing, the brain and spinal tissue must be bagged and disposed of in a [Class II landfill](#). A carcass may be transported within the state regardless of where it was harvested if the carcass parts are disposed of in a landfill after butchering and processing. Dumping carcasses is illegal, unethical, and can spread diseases, including chronic wasting disease. This requirement applies to all deer, elk, and moose carcasses wherever in the state they are harvested by hunters or as vehicle-killed salvage.
- **CWD sample submission is voluntary in most places in Montana.** There are new mandatory testing requirements for tags associated with CWD management near Libby. Testing is required for all animals harvested using the Deer B License 199-20 in HDs 100, 103 and 104, or Deer Permit 103-50 in HD 103. All hunters who want their harvested animal sampled can submit samples themselves by following steps on the Montana CWD Submission Guide or by [visiting a CWD Sampling Station](#).
 - **If you intend to use scents to either mask human odor or as an attractant for deer and elk, you should be aware of the regulations** regarding which can legally be used. You are safest if you use artificial scents, but you can also use scents certified by the Responsible Hunting Scent Association. You can identify these with the DPP? or RtQUIC? labels on them.

Don't feed wildlife. Feeding wildlife places wildlife at risk and puts them on a collision course with humans. Wild animals being fed by humans may congregate in unnaturally high numbers, which can lead to disease spread.



Nebraska: Hunters have two options to check deer

Starting this fall, hunters have the option to electronically report their November firearm deer season harvest or take their deer to a check station.

While checking in deer is mandatory, hunters may choose to check in their deer at a check station or through Telecheck for the first time this nine-day firearm season.

In the past, hunters were required to take their harvest to a physical check station during the firearm season while deer harvests during the remainder of the year were reported through Telecheck.

Chronic Wasting Disease surveillance still will be conducted in eastern deer management units during the firearm deer season. Firearm hunters in the Missouri, Elkhorn, Loup East, Wahoo, Blue Northwest, and Blue Southeast deer management units are encouraged to report their harvest in person and voluntarily submit their deer for free chronic wasting disease sampling. However, they may opt for Telecheck, as well.

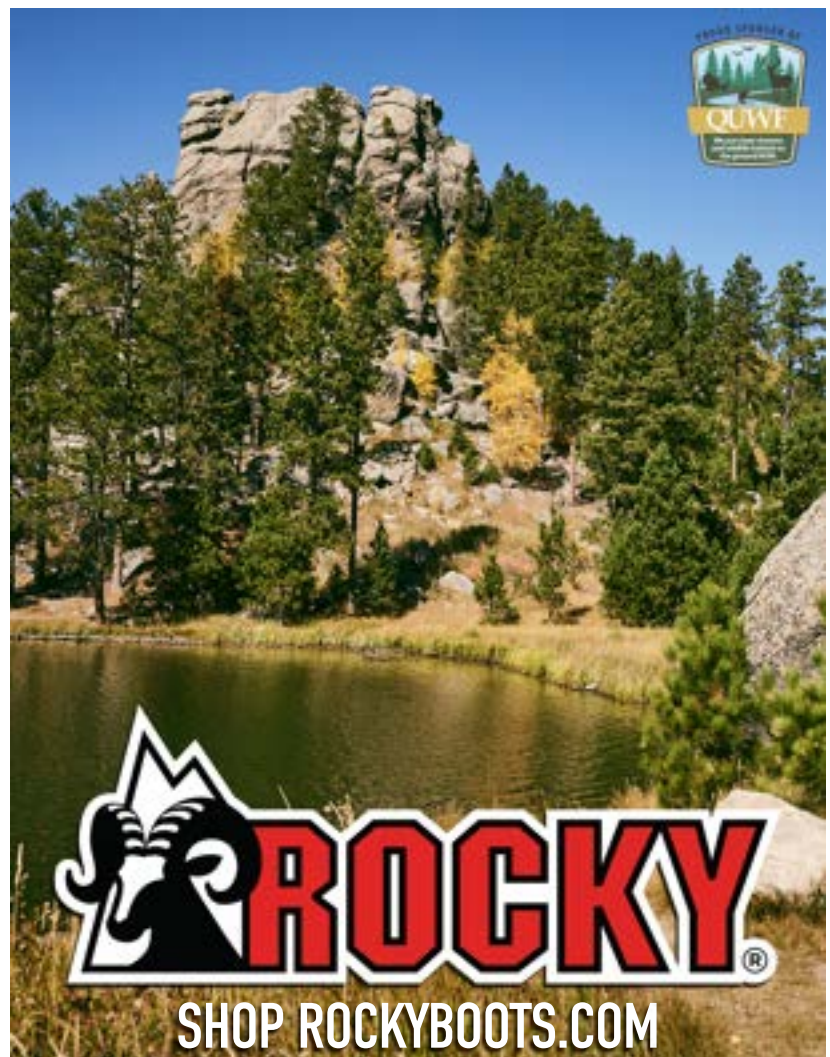
Telecheck is a free service that allows hunters to check their deer from the field or at home, by telephone or online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The online option is strongly recommended for those who opt to Telecheck. It was introduced in Nebraska in 2010 to save time and fuel costs for hunters. It also was a faster way for Game and Parks to obtain harvest data. Until now, it's only been used to report deer taken in seasons outside the November firearm season and for other species.

For more information on Telecheck, to view a map of check stations, or to access the online reporting form, go to OutdoorNebraska.gov/hunt/telecheck. A QR code has been added to deer permits to scan with a smartphone and take hunters directly to the Telecheck page.

The November firearm deer season is Nov. 16-24. Deer taken during the November Firearm season must be delivered to a check station or checked via Telecheck no later than 1 p.m. on the day following the close of the season. Deer taken outside the November Firearm season must be Telechecked within 48 hours of the kill and no later than 1 p.m. the day after the



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Forest Service Budget: It sounds like the Forest Service has drastically closed the reported \$750 Million gap through tough decisions and creative money management.

Reducing a budget gap of this size by \$700M is certainly not an easy task, and the Forest Service did it relatively quickly. However, this did not come without tough decisions.

The Forest Service has made tremendous progress regarding the budget for FY25 and has reduced the \$750M salary budget gap down to \$50M. It appears this was accomplished through personnel actions and permanent employee actions and was also assisted with trust funds and contract adjustments.

The decision was made weeks ago that no non-Fire seasonal hires will happen in fiscal year 2025, which should free up a tremendous amount of money. There have also been discussions about providing buy-out opportunities for “close to retirement” employees.

This does not mean everything is back to normal. Difficult decisions will still need to be made. The coming year will be difficult with the absence of seasonal workers. The current budget, which expired in September was continued until late December, when additional action will be required from Congress.

\$30 Million Bond on Maine Ballot to Repair and Restore Trails: On Tuesday, Maine voters will be asked to approve a \$30 million bond for funding that would be used for grants to build, repair and maintain non-motorized, motorized and multiuse trails.

If approved, it would provide the Bureau of Parks and Lands within the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry with the funds to distribute through a grant process over a 4-year period.

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.



ALPS introduces the Sierra full-zip jacket series

ALPS Brands, a leading manufacturer of outdoor recreational gear and soft goods, is excited to announce the company's new apparel line with the introduction of the [Sierra Full Zip Jacket](#) and the [Sierra Hooded Full Zip Jacket](#).

Created for multi-season and mixed-weather wear, the new Sierra series represents the ideal crossover jackets for challenging outdoor environments yet are stylish and practical enough for everyday wear in "civilization."

The jackets are based on a durable polyester and spandex blend outer shell and are lined with a soft, warm microfleece inner fabric. Between the microfleece inner shell and the insulated outer softshell, the Sierra jackets are the perfect choice for cool-season wear. The trim design also allows the jackets to serve as a comfortable mid-layer in cold weather.

In addition to their insulating properties and inherent wind resistance, the Sierra jackets' DWR-treated outer fabric also offers water-resistant performance when the weather turns foul. Sealing against the elements are YKK® VISLON® full-length front, left-/right-side chest pocket, and left-/right-side hand pocket zippers.

Bungee-style drawstrings with dual barrel locks provide optimal hood adjustment on the Sierra Hooded Full Zip Jacket to keep out wind and rain. Both jackets feature a drop-back hem, bungee-and-barrel lock, and adjustable closure system to regulate airflow and heat retention.

Available in small through XXXL sizes and offered in three solid color options — coyote brown, olive green, and slate blue — the Sierra Full Zip Jacket and the Sierra Hooded Full Zip Jacket are the perfect companions for the upcoming fall season. For more information on the new Sierra series jackets and vests, visit [ALPS OutdoorZ](#) or [ALPS Mountaineering](#).

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Wildlife commissioners get good news about quail, pheasant surveys

Members of the [Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission](#) heard good news about the results of the August roadside quail survey and pheasant survey during their regular meeting Oct. 7.

Upland game biologist Tell Judkins led commissioners through findings from [August's roadside quail survey](#), in which observations shot up from last year's 2.23 birds per route to 6.52 quail per route. The increase in quail seen in August is 92.3% greater than the 10-year average of 3.39 per route. Pheasant survey results were up from last year, as well.

While the August surveys haven't been the most reliable in predicting the coming hunting seasons, Judkins said the significant jump for quail is reason for higher expectations for more birds on the landscape this year.

Another round of quail surveys will be conducted this month, which will produce a better picture ahead of the Nov. 9 quail season opener. Pheasant season will open Dec. 1.

The Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission is the eight-member governing board of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

The Commission establishes state hunting and fishing regulations, sets policy for the Wildlife Department, and indirectly oversees all state fish and wildlife conservation activities. Commission members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Oklahoma Senate.



NSSF adds resources, fact sheets for veterans

NSSF, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, has developed a [webpage](#) containing resources for military veterans, including a [fact sheet](#) discussing mistaken beliefs that cause some veterans to forego seeking health care from the Dept. of Veterans Affairs (VA) because of concerns about having their firearms taken away.

“Understanding the facts about this topic can help veterans make informed decisions about seeking the health care they are entitled to,” said NSSF President and CEO Joe Bartozzi. “This care can range from a routine checkup to a hip replacement to screening for PTSD to mental health care.”

The fact sheet is titled “[Correcting Mistaken Beliefs about VA Confiscating Veterans’ Guns.](#)”

The webpage notes that “NSSF and its member companies proudly support America’s military service veterans. On this page NSSF shares information and resources that can benefit veterans’ health and resiliency, and that highlights their importance as employees and leaders in America’s firearm industry.”

The site includes information about several NSSF veterans-focused initiatives. They include programs to help prevent suicide among veteran and non-veteran populations and a careers center that lists job opportunities in the firearm industry, which employs thousands of veterans. Also noted is NSSF’s support for Honored American Veterans Afield (HAVA), an industry-run organization that helps the healing and re-integration of disabled combat veterans back into normal life through participation in hunting and the shooting sports.

The goal of the fact sheet is to dispel misinformation about veterans, health care and personal firearms. “Many veterans hold a common misconception that seeking mental health care or other treatment from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will lead to their guns being confiscated. This belief, though widespread, is mistaken. The following information gives the facts about veterans’ health care, disability claims, and gun ownership rights.” Read the complete “[Correcting Mistaken Beliefs about the VA Confiscating Veterans’ Guns.](#)”

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Review all products online at www.alpsbrands.com

Acorn mast survey shows strong red oak production

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife reports acorn production is strong in red oak trees according to the 2024 acorn mast survey. The survey is a useful report for hunters, which many may use to help guide them when it comes to finding wildlife during hunting seasons. The survey found an average of 68% of red oaks and 34% of white oaks bore fruit on 31 Ohio wildlife areas.

Each summer, Division of Wildlife employees scan the canopies of oaks at select wildlife areas to determine the percentage of trees that produced acorns as well as the relative size of the acorn crop. This is the 20th year the Division of Wildlife has completed the mast survey. This year, the proportion of red oaks statewide bearing acorns (68%) was well above last year (54%), while the percentage of white oaks statewide with acorns (36%) was slightly below last year (40%). The long-term average for red oak production is 55%, and 36% for white oaks.

Acorn abundances vary by region. All results, including tables and historical numbers, are available at wildohio.gov.

Red oaks in 2024 had an average abundance of 24% of the tree's crown holding acorns, up from 16% last year and besting the long-term average of 19%. White oaks averaged 5% acorn crown coverage, below both last year's result (9%) and the long-term average (9%). With red oaks faring well by both the presence and relative abundance metrics, hunters can expect to find more red oak acorns in the woods than last year, and fewer white oak acorns.

Acorns come in two basic types: red and white, coming from the red and white oak tree groups. Red oak acorns take two years to develop, and the acorns are bitter, containing a large amount of the chemical tannin. White oak acorns take only one year to develop and have a sweeter taste for wildlife.

White oak trees have leaves with rounded lobes and tend to drop their acorns in late summer and early fall. Red oak trees have leaves with bristled lobes and often drop their acorns later than white oaks, even into winter. These differences cause periodic fluctuations in statewide acorn abundance. Low mast production years are a normal part of this cycle, and wildlife readily adapt to find alternative food sources.

A single oak tree can produce thousands of acorns, feeding a diversity of wildlife such as white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, blue jays, ruffed grouse, squirrels, raccoons, woodpeckers, and foxes. Wildlife seeks out and eats acorns throughout the fall and winter.

As a critical food source for many forest wildlife species, acorn abundance has been linked to body condition, winter survival, and reproductive success. A year with low acorn abundance causes deer and other wildlife to move around more in search of food. In areas with poor acorn production, wild animals are more likely to feed near agricultural areas and forest edges.

Deer hunters can use acorn survey information to improve hunting success.



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Continued from Page 19 — In areas where acorns are an important part of the deer's diet, mast availability can affect deer movements and ultimately hunter success. In poor mast years, deer are forced to use other food sources, and travel distances between feeding and bedding areas may be longer.

Hunters may key in on travel corridors and alternate food sources. In regions with a strong acorn crop this fall, hunters may find success hunting in or near oak stands. Red oak stands may be of interest to deer hunters this fall, especially later in the year.

Oak trees have value beyond food and shelter for wildlife. Collect mature acorns in the fall and place them in a bucket of water. Keep the ones that sink and discard any that float, as those won't germinate.

Store the remaining acorns in the refrigerator or outside for at least eight weeks in the winter months. Plant the acorns under a shallow covering of soil in the early spring, water regularly, and enjoy seeing your new oak trees grow.

The Division of Wildlife is responsible for conserving and improving fish and wildlife resources in the Buckeye State. Follow the Division of Wildlife on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) for news stories, wildlife photography, outdoor recreation ideas, local wildlife information, and more.

Visit wildohio.gov to find locations to hunt, fish, trap, and view wildlife.

The mission of the Division of Wildlife is to conserve and improve fish and wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainable use and appreciation by all. Visit wildohio.gov to find out more.

ODNR ensures a balance between wise use and protection of our natural resources for the benefit of all. Visit the ODNR website at ohiodnr.gov.



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Pennsylvania bear hunters dreaming big

No other Pennsylvania hunting season offers such a potentially big payoff as this one.

Last year, hunters harvested 2,920 black bears across Pennsylvania, getting at least one in 58 of the state's 67 counties and 20 of its 22 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs). They took seven in the early season, 695 in archery season, 541 in the muzzleloader and special firearms seasons, 1,086 in the regular firearms season, and 591 in the extended seasons. Some were massive, too.

The average female bear checked in by hunters weighed 152 pounds; the average male went 198. But bigger bears – much bigger – showed up in the harvest.

Last year's largest was a 691-pounder taken in Pike County by Mitchell Jonathan, of Quakertown. But five other hunters got bears exceeding 600 pounds, and each of the top 10 heaviest bears weighed at least 576 pounds.

That's hardly surprising. Pennsylvania generally produces bears weighing more than 600 pounds every year, and often at least one or two topping 700. Pennsylvania's even seen seven bears exceeding 800 pounds harvested since 1992, the largest of them an 875-pounder taken in 2010 in Pike County.

"Those are some of the biggest bears you'll find anywhere in North America," said Game Commission Executive Director Steve Smith. "But that's just part of what makes Pennsylvania bear hunting so exciting.

"We've got lots of bears in lots of places, and a slate of seasons offering all sorts of opportunity throughout the fall, too."

Bear archery hunting got underway in WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D on Sept. 21, and will run through Nov. 29, including two Sundays, Nov. 17 and 24. In WMU 5B, the season runs from Oct. 5 through Nov. 22, with one Sunday, Nov. 17. Everywhere else in the state, the archery bear season is about to begin, starting Oct. 19 and running through Nov. 9.

The bear muzzleloader and special firearms seasons, the latter for junior and senior hunters and active-duty military and disabled persons permit holders, follows Oct. 24 to 26.

The regular statewide firearms bear season comes in on Nov. 23, continues on Sunday, Nov. 24, and runs through Nov. 26. Finally, the extended bear season – which runs concurrent with portions of the firearms deer season – goes from Nov. 30 to Dec. 7, including Sunday, Dec. 1, in WMUs 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4C, 4E and 5A, and from Nov. 30 through Dec. 14, including Dec. 1, in WMUs 2B, 5B, 5C and 5D.

That's all the same as last year, with one exception: the muzzleloader bear season was previously a week, rather than three days. It was shortened to address concerns about how many female bears are harvested in the early seasons.

That doesn't mean Pennsylvania's bears are in trouble, though. Melanie Weaver, the Game Commission's Game Mammals Section Supervisor, estimated the population right now at somewhere around 18,000. That's up over recent years and close again to a record high.

Still, the odds of any one particular hunter getting a black bear are admittedly long. More than 200,000 people chase Pennsylvania bears each year – no other species except deer puts more hunters in the woods – but fewer than 3% fill their tag.

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Continued from Page 21 — Hunters who want to join that select group are wise to focus on two things: food and cover. Weaver said that in autumn, bears consume as many calories as possible before denning for the winter, preferably close to thick, gnarly hiding places.

“The best thing that you can do is put yourself in an area that a bear is likely to visit when you are planning your hunt,” Weaver said. “Since gaining weight is important in the fall, look for food sources. But think, too, about places where they might rest, like swamps, mountain laurel, hemlock stands, regenerating clearcuts, riparian thickets and areas with downed trees.”

Hunters should also go into the woods with a plan for how to get a bear out if they harvest one. Even smaller bears can be difficult for one person to handle.

But that’s a good problem to have.

“Regardless of size, any bear harvested in Pennsylvania is something to be excited about,” Smith said.

Looking back

Hunters took more bears in Tioga County than anywhere else in 2023, with 176. Counties rounding out the top 10 for harvest, in order, were Lycoming with 170, Potter with 155, Pike with 142, Bradford with 138, Luzerne with 135, Monroe with 127, Wayne with 124, Clinton with 108 and Carbon with 101.

Final county harvests by region (with 2022 figures in parentheses) are:

Northwest – 357 (502): Forest, 68 (51); Warren, 65 (88); Venango, 64 (79); Jefferson, 50 (81); Clarion, 44 (80); Butler, 29 (40); Crawford, 24 (52); Erie, 8 (20); and Mercer, 5 (11).

Southwest – 141 (253): Armstrong, 41 (50); Somerset, 32 (64); Indiana, 24 (31); Fayette, 23 (34); Westmoreland, 13 (25); Cambria, 5 (44); Greene, 1 (3); Beaver, 1 (0); and Allegheny, 1 (2).

Northcentral – 1,034 (1,028): Tioga, 176 (187); Lycoming, 170 (152); Potter, 155 (119); Clinton, 108 (113); Elk, 90 (85); McKean, 90 (52); Cameron, 85 (52); Clearfield, 72 (114); Centre, 71 (122); and Union, 17 (32).

Southcentral – 162 (355): Bedford, 34 (71); Mifflin, 28 (34); Huntingdon, 25 (81); Juniata, 19 (26); Perry, 14 (29); Blair, 11 (33); Adams, 10 (7); Franklin, 9 (18); Cumberland 6 (8); Fulton, 4 (9); and Snyder, 2 (15).

Northeast – 1,067 (901): Pike, 142 (84); Bradford, 138 (126); Luzerne, 135 (126); Monroe, 127 (114); Wayne, 124 (81); Carbon, 101 (78); Sullivan, 75 (84); Susquehanna, 67 (47); Wyoming, 62 (50); Lackawanna, 57 (51); Columbia, 27 (46); Northumberland, 10 (10); and Montour, 2 (4).

Southeast – 159 (131): Schuylkill, 65 (65); Dauphin, 42 (27); Northampton, 21 (12); Berks, 16 (11); Lebanon, 10 (14); and Lehigh, 5 (2).

The final bear harvests by Wildlife Management Unit (with final 2022 figures in parentheses) were: WMU 1A, 19 (26); WMU 1B, 53 (115); WMU 2A, 3 (13); WMU 2B, 3 (4); WMU 2C, 87 (159); WMU 2D, 146 (202); WMU 2E, 41 (85); WMU 2F, 247 (258); WMU 2G, 565 (425); WMU 3A, 203 (174); WMU 3B, 343 (292); WMU 3C, 221 (165); WMU 3D, 451 (344); WMU 4A, 42 (114); WMU 4B, 47 (76); WMU 4C, 220 (190); WMU 4D, 124 (291); WMU 4E, 72 (109); WMU 5A, 18 (17); WMU 5B, 0 (2); WMU 5C, 15 (8); and WMU 5D, 0 (0).

Bear check stations

Hunters who harvest a bear must have it checked by the Game Commission. How to do that varies, depending on season.

During the four-day statewide regular firearms season and the extended bear season that overlaps with a portion of the firearms deer season, the Game Commission operates check stations at several locations. A list of those is available in the *2024-25 Pennsylvania Hunting & Trapping Digest*.

Hunters should be aware of one change from what’s printed there. The Trout Run Fire Hall in Lycoming County usually serves as a bear check station during the regular firearms bear season, and it’s listed as one for this year. But it won’t be. The fire hall was destroyed by floods in August. Instead, hunters can check bears at the Hepburn Township Fire Co.’s hall, 615 Route 973, Cogan Station, or take them to any other check station.

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Continued from Page 22 — Hunters who take a bear during any archery season or the October muzzleloader and special firearms seasons must contact the appropriate Game Commission region office for details on how to have their bear checked. Contact information for region offices is likewise in the digest.

In all cases, hunters are encouraged to use a stick to prop open their bear's mouth soon after harvest and before the jaw stiffens. That allows agency staff to remove a tooth, used to determine the bear's age.

License and orange requirements

Hunters who want to pursue bears in Pennsylvania need a general hunting license or mentored hunting permit, as well as a bear license.

Hunting licenses can be purchased online at <https://huntfish.pa.gov> or from issuing agents located in every county. A list of them is available at www.pgc.pa.gov under the "Hunt/Trap" tab. Licenses purchased online cannot be used until they are received through the mail because bear licenses contain harvest ear tags.

Bear hunters must wear a minimum of 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on the head, chest and back combined at all times during the four-day general firearms season, or when participating in the muzzleloader or special firearms bear seasons. The orange must be visible from 360 degrees.

2024 Iowa deer hunting off to a good start

Despite warm weather persisting in much of the state, roughly 6,000 deer have been registered so far through the youth and disabled hunter seasons, and the opening of the archery and early muzzleloader seasons, which is slightly higher than both last year and the five-year average.

The crop harvest, cooling temperatures and approaching rut, should increase deer activity leading to greater harvest success.

The long-anticipated rut, which will be in full swing by November, is when mature bucks spend much of their time actively tending and searching for does during daylight hours, creating opportunity for thrilling action from the tree stand at any hour of the day.

A major factor leading to Iowa's world-renowned buck quality is the simple fact that hunting during the rut – when bucks are most vulnerable – is restricted to compound and traditional bows. The archery season runs through Dec. 6, then closes for the two regular gun seasons before re-opening Dec. 23 through Jan. 10, 2025. The early muzzleloader season closes Oct. 20.

Deer Disease Update

Iowa's deer population is in the midst of another outbreak of hemorrhagic disease, which tends to affect Iowa deer from late summer to early fall. Though outbreak severity varies annually, it began increasing in September, with roughly 750 related deer mortalities reported throughout the state, which is considered a moderate outbreak compared to past years.

Continued on Page 24



Continued from Page 23 — The DNR added new online tools to the Deer Hunting webpage that allow the public to report and monitor hemorrhagic disease activity. Hemorrhagic disease has been reported in at least 78 Iowa counties, though disease activity has generally been mild at the county scale at fewer than 50 mortalities per county.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) continues to increase in geographic spread and prevalence, though most Iowa counties have yet to detect their first CWD-positive deer. Last year, eight new counties were added to the list: Des Moines, Guthrie, Howard, Jones, Marshall, Monroe, Muscatine, and Tama, bringing the total number of counties that have had a positive deer to 23.

Testing of hunter-harvested deer is available in each county by contacting the local DNR wildlife or law enforcement staff. Hunters can help limit the spread of chronic wasting disease by refraining from feeding/baiting deer and transporting deer carcasses across counties. The Iowa DNR primarily manages the disease in areas with moderate-to-high deer densities by adding antlerless tags within special Deer Management Zones.

Homes for bats during Bat Week: Oct. 24-31

The onset of fall sends Vermont's bats into motion, which makes it an important time for conservation-minded Vermonters to learn about, and help conserve, our nine native bat species.

If you have noticed bats roosting in your attic, barn or office over the summer, fall and spring are the perfect times to safely evict these uninvited guests from your property.

Bats migrate between winter and summer roosts during the fall and spring and do not have vulnerable young at these times. You can learn how to safely evict bats from your building at the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's [best management practices](#) page.

You can also help bat conservation efforts by [reporting large colonies of bats living in structures to the department's website](#). Locations with rare colonies of endangered [little brown bats](#) are eligible for free bat houses from Vermont Fish and Wildlife.

Bat houses provide an alternative location for safely evicted bats to remain in your yard and continue eating huge quantities of insects that may be forest, agricultural or human pests.

Variety is important, so placing at least two bat houses with variable solar exposure to help bats find the right temperature ranges throughout the summer helps bats raise their young successfully. Information on successful bat house design and placement can be found at <https://www.merlintuttle.org/selecting-a-quality-bat-house>

Bat houses can be put up any time of year but do require some simple maintenance. Late fall or winter is the time to look up inside your bat house and make sure all the bats have left before cleaning out any abandoned wasp nests and planning any needed caulking or repainting.

“Fall also means Halloween, and scary images of bats, but this presents an opportunity to bring positive attention to bats as well,” said Vermont Fish and Wildlife Small Mammals Biologist Alyssa Bennett. “We celebrate ‘Bat Week’ in the days leading up to Halloween.” Bat Week takes place October 24-31 and aims to raise awareness about the vital ecological functions of bats and to dispel the many myths and misinformation about them.

Anyone interested in learning more can visit the official Bat Week website at www.BatWeek.org, or email Alyssa.Bennett@vermont.gov for more information about what they can do right here in Vermont to promote bat conservation.

“Vermont is home to several species of threatened and endangered bats that we are working to conserve and recover,” added Bennett. “We hope Vermonters will support these efforts. “Bats are a very important part of our natural world, and now more than ever they need our help.”



More than half of North American bats at risk

Washington D.C. - Last night, [The State of the Bats in North America](#), the companion study to the [2023 report](#), identifies major threats to North American Bats and calls for urgent, coordinated support and action across Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The findings indicate the greatest impacts to threatened bat species include climate change, disease, wind energy production, and land-use change.

Key takeaways from the study include:

- 53% of North American bat species are estimated to be at moderate to very high risk of extinction within 15 years.
- 90% of North American bat species are estimated to have populations that have likely decreased over the past 15 years, indicating that conservation action is urgently needed in all three countries.
- 24% of North American bat species have transnational ranges across one or more international boundaries within Canada, the U.S., and Mexico, making international collaboration crucial to conservation planning at relevant range-wide scales.
- Climate change is considered the number one threat to North American bats.

“It's nothing short of alarming that over half of North America's bat species are at serious risk of collapse and need urgent conservation action,” said Dr. Winifred Frick, Chief Scientist at Bat Conservation International, and an author of the study. “One of the clearest outcomes of this research is that many threats can only be addressed through international collaboration since bats and the threats they face do not recognize political borders.”

This newly published study outlines how the North American Bat Conservation Alliance identified 102 experts to evaluate the conservation status of 153 bat species and their threats in Canada, the U.S., and Mexico. This assessment provides a baseline for measuring the health of North American bat species that can be used to track future trends and inform conservation actions.

While the results highlight areas of concern for biodiversity, the study also presents strategies for addressing common threats as an international community.

“Bats are essential to ecosystem health. State fish and wildlife agencies have a critical role to play in recovering imperiled species of bats, fish and other wildlife and preventing species from becoming further endangered. But without adequate funding for programs, such as State Wildlife Action Plans, states and other partners are fighting an uphill battle,” said Judith Camuso, Commissioner of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and President of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). “We look forward to working with our partners in collaborative efforts to support bat conservation throughout North America.”

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Continued from Page 25 — State fish and wildlife agencies have designated nearly 100 different kinds of bats as species in greatest conservation need in State Wildlife Action Plans, providing proactive solutions to conserve bats and other wildlife species of greatest conservation need. However, without adequate funding, state wildlife agencies will not be able to fully implement their plans to prevent wildlife from becoming further threatened or endangered. The Association supports legislation that provides additional funding for states to take proactive steps to support the recovery of at-risk species, including the bipartisan Recovering America's Wildlife Act ([S.1149](#)), which was reintroduced by Senators Heinrich (D-N.M.) and Tillis (R-N.C.), which would provide states with the necessary resources to improve the outlook for North American bats.

“The study reveals a concerning future for our North American bat populations,” said Leanne Burns, AFWA Bat Conservation Coordinator and another co-author on the study. “But through proactive and internationally collaborative actions, robust wildlife conservation policy, and dedicated funding we can prioritize conservation efforts to change the current trajectory for bats.”

The State of the Bats in North America study is published in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* and provides the most comprehensive assessment of North American bats to date. It was produced by the North American Bat Conservation Alliance, representing a consortium of government agencies in Canada, the U.S., and Mexico, as well as private organizations committed to bat conservation. Major contributors to this study include scientists from Bat Conservation International (BCI), the North American Bat Monitoring Program; the White-nose Syndrome Response Team; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Canadian Wildlife Service (Environment and Climate Change Canada); and the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation releases economic report

A new report released by the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation provides the most detailed and up-to-date data concerning the economic impact and importance of [America's hunters](#) and [sport shooters](#) to national and state economies. The report delves into the economic significance of these sportsmen in [every state and every legislative district](#).

“It's important that people – the general public, and state and federal legislators – understand that America's hunters and sport shooters are an incredibly important force when it comes to our national, state and local economies, as well as providing an outsized share of conservation funding at both the state and federal levels,” said Evan Heusinkveld, President and CEO of the Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation. “With this information, sportsmen can educate friends, family and their representatives at every level by clearly illustrating in dollars and cents what they bring to the table and mean to the bottom line.”

The new report boasts stunning numbers when it comes to the impact hunters and shooters have on our economies. Together they are responsible for more than \$106.2 BILLION in retail sales and contributed \$133 billion to economic growth in 2022 by supporting more than 1.3 million jobs that created in excess of \$80.5 billion in wages and income. In turn, that economic stimulus generated \$251 billion in economic activity through the multiplier effect.

Legislators, state wildlife agencies, sportsmen and the general public can now quantify the impact of hunters and shooters to local, state and national economies – an important consideration as wildlife management increasingly becomes a matter of public opinion.

“Many people may not care about hunting, the Second Amendment or conservation, but everyone is impacted by the economy and these reports clearly illustrate that hunters and shooters provide an important, and consistent, economic engine for national and local economic health,” said Rob Southwick, President of Southwick Associates. “Many look at hunting and target shooting as something people do when the real workday is over, but these numbers show hunting and target shooting are the real workdays for so many people.”

Reports are available for every state, and for every legislative district within each state, and include such details as the number of active hunters or shooters in each district, how much they spend on those activities, and their contributions to local, state and federal taxes through those purchases, among other data.

Continued on Page 27

Continued from Page 26 — Each state and legislative district is available as a convenient one-page graphic that can be easily downloaded and shared digitally through email or on social media, as well as printed and handed to someone.

Economic Impact: Hunting Facts

- The revenue generated by the hunting industry is higher than the Gross Domestic Product of 121 countries.
- **Hunters contributed nearly \$38 million a day in state, local, and federal taxes that goes to support wildlife agencies and conservation.**
- **Hunting generated more revenue (\$45.2 billion) than Nationwide (\$44 billion), United Airlines (\$43 billion), Dow (\$43 billion), and Tyson Foods (\$42.4 billion).**
- The hunting industry supports 540,923 jobs – that’s more than any US company except Walmart and Amazon.
- The retail sales produced by hunting (\$45.2 billion) is nearly equal to the combined system-wide sales of both Starbucks (\$26.5 billion) and McDonald’s (\$21.1 billion combined).
- The revenue generated by hunting is 10 times more than the revenue of the top 10 most valuable NFL teams combined (\$4.5 billion).
- Hunting generated well over three times more revenue in 2020 (\$45.2 billion) than the NFL (\$12 billion).
- Hunting generates more revenue (\$45.2 billion) than the worth of the Top 10 most valuable MLB teams combined (\$33 billion).
- The revenue generated by migratory bird hunting (\$5.9 billion) is more than the revenue of the top 10 most valuable NFL teams combined (\$4.5 billion).

Economic Impact: Target Shooting Facts

- The economic activity generated by target shooting (\$61.2 billion) is greater than the Gross Domestic Product of 7 states.
- The contribution to the U.S. GDP from the activities of target shooters is greater than the overall GDP of 132 countries.
- The revenue generated by the handgun industry (\$20 billion) is higher than the Gross Domestic Product of 97 countries.
- U.S. target shooters outnumber the population of every U.S. state and DC, except California.
- The federal taxes generated by target shooting activities (\$19.9 billion) are over three times the budget of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in 2020 (\$5.35 billion).
- Target shooting generated more revenue (\$61.2 billion) than Sysco (\$60.1 billion), Christian Dior (\$60.1 billion), Lockheed Martin (\$59.8 billion), or HP (\$58.8 billion).
- More people went target shooting in 2020 than participated in golf, tennis, basketball, or soccer.
- The revenue generated by target shooting (\$61.2 billion) is greater than the combined revenue of all 32 NFL teams (\$13 billion).
- The revenue generated by rifle shooting is over 10 times the combined gross revenue of the top 25 box office movies of 2020.

To view the complete report and download your state or district graphic, visit www.sportsmensalliance.org/reports or www.southwickassociates.com.

The Hunting and Target Shooting in America: An Economic Force for Conservation reports were produced for Sportsmen’s Alliance Foundation by Southwick Associates via a Multistate Grant awarded by the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and were off of the 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation report by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other independent resources.

GA Hunters for the Hungry serves hurricane-hit towns

COVINGTON, GA – The Georgia Hunters for the Hungry (GHFTH) program is helping deliver donated venison to food banks in Statesboro and Augusta, communities still recovering from the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene.

Since its inception in 1993, GHFTH has provided an estimated 1.5 million meals to Georgians in need. This year, the program is receiving a significant boost thanks to increased funding from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

This will expand the annual donation of processed venison from the typical 10,000 pounds to 120,000 pounds—a timely increase as many families and communities across the state are still struggling to rebuild their lives, homes, and businesses.

Recently, the Georgia Wildlife Federation delivered venison to two of the state's hardest-hit communities, Augusta and Statesboro.

Donated deer were processed at The Meat Shed in Eatonton and Steve Bishop's Processing in Covington. GHFTH funding covered the processing fees, resulting in 623 pounds of venison going to GAP Ministries in Augusta and 463 pounds to The Food Bank in Statesboro.



At the core of the program is Georgia's generous hunting community. Hunters donate field-dressed deer to participating processors, with program funding covering processing costs. On average, one deer yields about 50 pounds of ground venison, which processors then distribute to local food banks.

Food banks often face challenges in sourcing protein, and GHFTH helps fill this gap by providing a healthy, organic source of protein to families in need.

The success of the Georgia Hunters for the Hungry program depends largely on hunter-harvested deer. As the 2024-2025 deer season begins, hunters can contribute by donating extra harvests to nearby participating processors. For more information, visit gwf.org/ghfth.

Program partners include the Georgia Wildlife Federation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division, Feeding Georgia, and Municipal Development Services, LLC.

* * * * *

Farm Bill: *The Farm Bill expired on September 30th.* The last bill was passed in 2018 and was scheduled to be renewed in 2023 - but lawmakers extended that deadline to 2024.

After January 1, 2025, the law reverts to statutes approved in 1938 and 1949 that don't expire and are temporarily suspended with the passing of each new farm bill.

Although there was language introduced in both the House and Senate, there was no agreement. That means that many of the programs within that bill are no longer in place.

The farm bill sets policies for many agricultural programs. It is also loosely related for rural development and nutrition programs, including the Emergency Food Assistance program and SNAP. Food programs in the bill may account for nearly 80% of the farm bill. The bill is estimated to be worth at least \$1.5 trillion.

Also included in the Farm Bill is provision for the CRP - Conservation Reserve Program. Snowmobile Trails are located on many CRP lands across the US.

We will keep you advised as information becomes available on the impact of this bill's expiration on the CRP trails.

North Carolina Wildlife Resources updates

Law Enforcement Provides Rescue Support through Swift Water Rescue Program

Our N.C. Wildlife Resources Law Enforcement Swift Water Rescue Team was deployed to Western N.C. the Thursday prior to the storm hitting, providing life-saving rescues to people, sometimes even swimming into homes to locate victims.

In McDowell County, our team, along with the N.C. Office of State Fire Marshall, received a call of a landslide. Rescuers hiked eight miles to then traverse the victim across raging flood waters to safety.

Currently, teams are completing primary searches and continue with recovery efforts and damage assessments. There are huge debris fields with logs, vehicles, campers, roofs, trees and other items that are required to be checked and searched. The piles of debris are several times the size of a house. They are also marking any dangerous objects such as propane tanks.



The team has made well over 1,000 saves and welfare checks to date. Along the way, the team has been handing out small amounts of supplies and communicating current and imminent concerns of residents.

In addition to the NCWRC Swift Water Rescue Team, there are more than 100 wildlife law enforcement officers actively working on search and rescue efforts in the region, including officers from as far as the coast.

Potential for Increased Human–Bear Conflicts in the Aftermath of Hurricane Helene

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission is receiving reports of an increase in human-black bear interactions in Asheville and Buncombe counties. Impacts from the hurricane on infrastructure and local government services are leading to increased opportunities for bears to find food due to the availability of trash, unattended donation drop-offs and the attractiveness of rotting foods, particularly in damaged homes and businesses.

We recognize the immense challenges facing Asheville and surrounding communities trying to recover from this unprecedented event and want to offer resources to help mitigate human–bear conflicts.

New Report on NC Turkey Population Indicates an “At-Capacity” Level Based on Habitat

Results from our recently published [Review of Wild Turkey Data and Management](#) indicate our turkey population is stable across the state, may be slightly declining in the Mountain and Piedmont regions and suggest North Carolina is near or at the maximum number of turkeys that the habitat can support.

Upland Game Bird Biologist Hannah Plumpton published the report. She developed the review by using surveys and data obtained through three independent research opportunities to create a comprehensive review of the status of our state’s turkey population.

“This means that all the areas that can have turkeys, have turkeys and are not going to drastically increase in number, unless there is a dramatic improvement to the habitat on a large scale,” explains Plumpton.

Special thanks to staff, hunters and members of the public who participated in various surveys used in this review. “Without their participation and help in providing the data, we would not be able to accurately monitor the turkey population.”

Highlights from the [2020-2024 Turkey Ecology Project](#).

A new threat to elms in North America

The elm zigzag sawfly, *Aproceros leucopoda*, recently has been detected in several midwestern states. The sawfly is from eastern Asia and is not considered a threat in its native habitat, but here it can cause severe damage. Feeding exclusively on most native and introduced elm species, the elm zigzag sawfly is a defoliator that causes damage to the leaves of the trees. Look for zigzag chewing patterns in elm leaves and report any suspected elm zigzag sawfly infestations to the [Midwest Invasive Species Network](#).



ALPS introduces Evolution Merino 150 shirts

ALPS Brands, a leading manufacturer of outdoor recreational gear and soft goods, has launched a new apparel series designed specifically for high-activity outdoor adventure.

The all-new Evolution Merino 150 series base-layer shirts are made from 100-percent certified, ethically sourced Woolmark Merino wool — the best-performing wool on the market today.

The light 150 gsm fabric is comprised of premium 17.5 micron-diameter wool fibers, making the Evolution Merino 150 shirts ultra-soft and super-comfortable against the skin.

The combination of superior wool fibers and a performance-engineered weave means the Evolution Merino 150 shirts deliver maximum breathability and moisture wicking to regulate core body temperature across a range of activities and climate conditions.

Worn solo, the Evolution Merino 150 shirts offer 50+ UPF sun protection — ideal for warm weather wear in open country or high-altitude environments.

When it is time to don mid-layer clothing, the Evolution Merino shirts offer exceptional heat-trapping properties that are essential for cool weather performance.

Additional benefits of this premium fabric include natural stain and odor resistance as well as fast drying.

The recommended temperature range for both shirt styles is 32°F and above — making them suitable for use as a base layer in cool weather or as an outer layer in warm weather.

The Evolution Merino 150 base-layer shirts are designed with a contemporary athletic fit and come in [short-sleeve](#) and [long-sleeve](#). The Evolution is offered in sizes Small – 3XL.



Jim Shepard: Strange but true - sheep wrap

Reprinted from The Outdoor Wire by Jim Shepard — The convoluted story of the creation of a hybrid sheep known as the Montana Mountain King may finally have come to an end.

On Monday, eighty-one year old Arthur “Jack” Schubarth of Vaughn, Montana, was sentenced to six months in federal prison for illegally using tissue and testicles from Marco Polo sheep taken in Kyrgyzstan in 2013 and using them to inseminate domestic sheep to create hybrids to be sold to hunting ranches.

According to reports, U.S. District Judge Brian Morris “struggled” to come up with a sentence for Schubarth due to his age and lack of a criminal record. Ultimately, he arrived at the prison sentence, a \$20,000 fine and \$4,000 payment to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Earlier this year Schubarth plead guilty to a Lacey Act violations resulting from his having paid a third-party to store tissues that he acquired from an illegally imported, hunter-harvested carcass. He then had DNA from that sheep used to clone more sheep.

Ultimately, Schubarth collected 165 Marco Polo sheep embryos -one of which became the Montana Mountain King. Along the way, he and his co-conspirators managed to acquire falsified veterinary certificates from state livestock boards to make transporting the sheep easier. Those statements described the cloned sheep as New Mexico Dahl, bighorn sheep or domestic sheep.

Schubarth’s accomplices in the “Frankensheep” scheme included three Texans, a Minnesotan and another Montanan. They have all been charged with violations related to the “alternative livestock husbandry” industry.

Monday’s sentencing brings a controversial trial to a close, but it does nothing to calm the controversies over canned hunting, more specifically the question after harvesting an animal on a hunting-specific facility: do you own *all* the animal (including the “parts” from which females could be impregnated with the trophy genes) or only the trophy portions?

There’s also the matter of the Montana Mountain King - the actual ram produced in the scheme. He was confiscated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and is currently being held in an accredited facility until he can be transferred to a zoo.

Schubarth is no stranger to the hunting world. Since 1987, he owned and operated Sun River Enterprises, LLC an “alternative livestock ranch” that buys, sells and breeds alternative livestock including mountain sheep, mountain goats and other ungulates, primarily for private hunting preserves.

* * * * *

Did You Know? *Federal officials have finalized a \$1.5 billion loan to restart a nuclear power plant in southwest Michigan, the Palisades, meaning the plant’s owners can begin spending the money on repairs and upgrades.*

Officials with the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the loan closing on Monday while revealing that two rural electric cooperatives will get a combined \$1.3 billion to buy power from the facility.

The announcements bring total public subsidies for Palisades, the 53-year old plant, which is owned by Holtec International, to more than \$3.1 billion so far. That includes a \$300 million contribution from the state of Michigan.

This is the first time in American history, and I want to underscore, the first time in American history, that a nuclear plant will be restarted," said Deputy Energy Secretary David Turk.

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