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Conservation Notes

Current topics and issues affecting hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation in our North Dakota.

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Badlands Obituary

Sometimes doing nothing is a good strategy. Most times it's not. The "do nothing" strategy for protecting what's left of our iconic undeveloped public badlands is not working. The continual piece meal conversion to other uses is resulting in the loss of its historic value. Failure to preserve the few remaining wild areas, its solitude, its history, and scenic beauty are something we will only be able to tell our grandkids. By not protecting those few remaining acres suitable for wilderness, the badlands signature landforms are being lost forever. We've gone from a million acres suitable for wilderness to now only about 40,000 acres, a 96% reduction.

North Dakotans recognize the symbolic and traditional values of the badlands. But our leadership lacks the initiative to safeguard the remaining portion of the badlands eligible for wilderness designation. The undeveloped badlands can and should be preserved with well-thought-out strategies. That's what our leaders are supposed to do. It can't be just about the money but for our heritage.

Therefore, the time for the State to act is quickly fading. Now is the time to protect those few remaining acres. If we don't act soon, we'll be writing the **Badlands Obituary**. It will document the memory of something we should have done.

For more information on this or other conservation topics, contact: John Bradley, Executive Director, North Dakota Wildlife Federation, (jbradley.ndwf@gmail.com), Mike McEnroe, Past President, North Dakota Wildlife Federation (memcenroe@midco.net) or Rick Nelson, Past President, North Dakota Chapter, The Wildlife Society, (bluebill@bis.midco.net). For a complete list of Conservation Notes visit (ndctws.org)-Library.