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Conservation Notes

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

Issue #44 – November 2019

SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET

North Dakota's outdoor recreation is a mainstay of our state's rural economy. Elected officials often extoll the virtues of hunting and fishing as one of the primary factors keeping small towns from dying. Outdoor recreation is a significant quality of life issue for North Dakotans and is why many people choose to live here. One only needs to drive through small town North Dakota and see the signs welcoming outdoor enthusiasts to know how much these activities are valued. Whether it's the café, gas station, bar or grocery store, they all benefit from robust outdoor recreation in their area

But outdoor opportunities are diminishing. Lost habitat and lack of access from industrialization, land use intensification, urbanization, and minimal support programs that maintain and expand the economic values of the "third leg of North Dakota's economic stool"- outdoor recreation - result in diminished rural revenue.

If North Dakota is serious about keeping Main Street North Dakota alive and well, then elected officials should embrace and support programs like the 'Million Acre' habitat plan. When we build programs that enhance outdoor recreation, residents and non-residents will spend money on small town main streets.

For more information on this message or other conservation topics, contact: 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 (www.ndctws.wordpress.com)-articles.

