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Conservation Notes

Current topics and issues affecting hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation

in our State. Issue #49, April 2020

Hunters and Anglers: A Cog in the Wheel to Economic Recovery

How does North Dakota continue to keep and grow the significant economic benefits from hunters and anglers? NDSU's Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics determined that hunters and anglers contributed a gross business volume of \$2.1 billion annually to North Dakota's economy, based on the 2017-18 hunting and fishing seasons. \$974.4 million dollars on direct expenditures and \$1.1 billion in secondary economic benefits. Maintaining that economic engine can only be accomplished by maintaining, improving, and providing adequate habitat for wildlife and fish species that hunters and anglers spend their hard-earned money to pursue. Habitat always has been and will continue to be the key to economic benefits from hunting and fishing, especially for rural main street. We need to consider and implement innovative approaches to increase our habitat base. An excellent example is **South Dakota's new "Second Century Working Lands Habitat Program"** (<https://habitat.sd.gov/resources/secondcenturyhabitatfund.aspx>). Focused on working with private lands, the program pays farmers and ranchers to plant perennial grass and cover on marginal or less productive lands. An offshoot of precision agriculture, free grass and forb seed along with a one-time payment while still allowing for haying and grazing is an incentive to take marginal land out of production, and benefit hunting and fishing. Coupled with the million-acre plan proposed by the North Dakota Wildlife Federation, these types of innovative ideas can enhance economic benefits, especially during these hard times, and is a bridge to our economic recovery in the future! Being able to use and generate recreation and create economic value now from our outdoor resources will pay big dividends in our recovery. Now more than ever, North Dakota needs programs like the South Dakota effort, and Federation proposal, with the strong base of sportsmen and women providing economic benefits while enjoying our great outdoors. Maintaining, improving, and providing more habitat can get that accomplished.

For more information on this message 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 (www.ndctws.wordpress.com)-articles.