



P.O. Box 1442, Bismarck, N.D. 58502



P.O. Box 1091, Bismarck, N. D. 58502

Conservation Notes

Current topics and issues affecting hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation in our North Dakota.
Issue #52, July 2020

Finding the Middle Ground on Access

North Dakota's valuable hunting and fishing heritage is founded on landowner/sportsman relationships, annually contributing billions of dollars to North Dakota's economy. Unfortunately, some landowners do not have time or want to pay for physically posting hunting/trespass access signs. As a result, the 2019 Legislature authorized an interim study of electronic posting in 3 counties: Richland, Ramsey, and Slope. Electronic posting provides landowners with a method of posting land without physical signs. Electronic posting may improve communication between landowners/tenants and sportsman by providing a current and valid landowner/tenant point of contact. This fall, hunters in these three counties will have the opportunity to see how a smart phone app can help them better plan a hunting trip by providing a practical way to obtain permission/access. With the information we learn from this year's trial, the current version of electronic posting will likely be expanded across the state. It is a compromise between hunters and landowners helping to keep North Dakota's hunting heritage and economy strong.

The 2021 Legislature will likely deal with posting regulations again. One option, automatic posting of all land for hunting has been a contentious issue in North Dakota for a number of years. This option would reverse the current process by requiring those landowners/tenants, who prefer to leave their land unposted, to physically post their land open for hunting or deal with hunters calling for permission.

Nationwide surveys have consistently shown the number one reason for quitting hunting was lack of access. The continued decline in sportsman hunting access in North Dakota will have a negative economic impact to our economy. Therefore, it is critical to resolve this issue in a way that is supported by both landowners and sportsman. The electronic posting study underway is a good start, and consideration should be given to expand the concept across the state after this year's trial.

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.