

Unintentionally Trapped Mountain Lion Euthanized In Nebraska

LINCOLN, Neb. — A mountain lion unintentionally caught in a bobcat trap in Dawes County was euthanized by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission on Dec. 26.

The responding conservation officer determined the mountain lion was pulling out the stakes that anchor the trap and would not survive if it escaped with the trap and stakes attached.

The trap had been legally set and the trapper called Game and Parks immediately upon discovering the mountain lion, as required by Game and Parks policy.

The mountain lion was an adult female weighing approximately 120 pounds. Tracks of two nearly adult-sized mountain lions were found in the area after the female was euthanized. The young mountain lions are likely the female's offspring and were determined to be large enough to survive on their own, according to Sam Wilson, Game and Parks' carnivore program manager.

Game and Parks requests fur harvesters immediately contact the agency if a mountain lion is incidentally trapped. Anyone with trail camera photographs or other evidence of mountain lions should contact the agency.

Reservations For Custer State Park Open Jan. 2

CUSTER STATE PARK — The New Year will find many people making plans for their 2012 camping trips in South Dakota. Beginning Monday, Jan. 2, campsite reservations may be made for the upcoming season in Custer State Park.

Campsite reservations for Custer State Park will be accepted beginning at 6 a.m. Mountain Time on Jan. 2 for all arrival dates between May 18 and Oct. 8, 2012. Those reservations can be made by calling 1-800-710-2267 between 6 a.m. and 4 p.m. Mountain Time.

Beginning Jan. 2, online reservations for Custer State Park can be made 24 hours a day at www.campsd.com. Those website visitors can also view details about each site, such as pad length and amount of shade.

Telephone and online reservations for campsites at other South Dakota state parks and recreation areas can be made 90 days before arrival for the summer and fall camping seasons. Feb. 18 is the first day to make reservations for Friday, May 18, which is Open House Weekend at South Dakota state parks and recreation areas. Reservations open Feb. 25 for arrivals on the Friday of Memorial Day weekend.

The reservation center is currently accepting reservations for group campsites, lodge facilities and camping cabins for some 2012 arrivals. Group lodge facilities at Lake Thompson, Mina Lake, Oahe Downstream, and Shadell Recreation Areas, and Palisades and Newton Hills State Parks can currently be reserved for all arrival dates in 2012. The call center is taking group camping reservations in Custer State Park and Lewis and Clark and North Point recreation areas for the 2012 camping season. Reservations for camping cabins can be made year-round, within 90 days of arrival.

For more information on reservations, visit South Dakota state parks online at www.gfp.sd.gov.

Game And Parks Suggests Tips For Safety On Ice

LINCOLN, Neb. — Stay safe on the ice this winter while enjoying a day of ice fishing. Follow these Nebraska Game and Parks Commission tips for ice safety:

- There should be at least 4 inches of clear, solid ice before an angler ventures onto a frozen lake or pond.
- Wear a life jacket.
- Commercial or homemade ice picks should be worn around your neck in case you fall through and need something to grip the ice and pull yourself out.
- Use an ice chisel or spud bar to check ice thickness every step of the way.
- Keep a long rope with you so someone can help rescue you if you break through the ice.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages. These affect your judgment and increase your chances for hypothermia.

For more on ice safety, read the following article in the December issue of NEBRASKAand Magazine: <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/Fishing/pdfs/ice%20safety.pdf>. To view a Game and Parks YouTube video on ice safety, visit <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/fishing/guides/ice-fishing/ifrescue.asp>.

GARY HOWEY | OF THE OUTDOORS

S.D.'s Great Lakes Offers Great Fishing In 2012

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

If you could get on the river, fishing on the Missouri River system in 2011 was a real challenge, with high water everywhere as well as some of the river being closed to boating.

Hopefully, something was learned after last year's flooding fiasco and we won't have a repeat of it again.

Because of the volume of water coming down the river and through the dams, many things changed including the relocation of fish downstream through the dams and unless all our fish were washed down river to New Orleans, fishing should be excellent in 2012.

One thing that will defiantly change will be the layout of the lakes and rivers and the channels and structure in the system as sand, trees, vegetation and other things have been moved by the tremendous flows coming down the river.

The old honey holes that were once 10 to 12 foot deep may now be just a few feet deep or even high and dry. The chutes and channels we used to run through will have changed drastically, so our first trips on the water are going to be a real learning experience.

Don't be surprised if anglers' downstream start catching fish, which in the past only cruised the depths of the upstream reservoirs as the high flows throughout the system made it easy for all species of fish to move through the dam system and down river.

We're very fortunate to be living so close to some of the finest fishing in the upper Midwest. The South Dakota Great Lakes, which includes Lake Oahe, Lake Sharpe, Lake Francis Case and Lewis and Clark, are the home of numerous species of fish, many of them of trophy proportion.

Walleyes, sauger, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, crappies, catfish, pike, trout and even salmon inhabit these waters, giving anglers about numerous fishing opportunities.

Lake Oahe...

The largest of the South Dakota Great Lakes, Oahe was created by water backed up behind Oahe Dam at Pierre, South Dakota on up into North Dakota. Lake Oahe covers 370,000 acres and at its deepest point is 205 feet deep. The lake is approximately 231 miles long with 2,250 miles of shoreline.

Best known for its excellent walleye fishing, Lake Oahe also holds excellent populations of



Great Lakes Fishing: Larry Myhre (Sioux City, Iowa), Joel Oltmans (Norfolk Neb.), columnist Gary Howey and John Kramer (Hartington, Neb.) are pictured with walleyes and white bass taken on a fishing trip on Lake Francis Case.

Chinook Salmon, Northern Pike, Rainbow Trout, Smallmouth Bass and White Bass.

Lake Sharpe...

Lake Sharpe the 2nd largest reservoir in South Dakota was formed behind Big Bend Dam, 1.5 miles southwest of Fort Thompson, covering of 56,884 acres. The deepest spot in the lake is 78 feet and is approximately 80 mi long, with 200 miles of shoreline.

As with the other reservoirs in South Dakota, walleyes are what most anglers go after on Lake Sharpe. Sharpe also holds excellent populations of sauger, smallmouth bass, channel catfish, and white bass.

Lake Francis Case... lies behind Fort Randall Dam near Pickstown, South Dakota is a 102,000-acre impoundment with depths of 140 feet. It's approximately 107 miles long with 540 miles of shoreline.

As with the other Missouri River Reservoirs, walleyes are what fishermen are looking for on the lake. Other species found in the reservoir include: northern pike, sauger, sunfish, yellow perch, common carp, black bullhead, channel catfish, and smallmouth bass.

Lewis and Clark Lake

Lewis & Clark Lake, the last of the Missouri Reservoirs in South Dakota and lies above Gavins Point Dam, near Yankton, South Dakota. The lake forms the border between South Dakota and Nebraska. It's approximately 25 miles long; it has 31,000 surface acres with 90 miles of shoreline and 45 feet at its deepest point.

Walleyes top the list of fish in Lewis & Clark Lake with excellent populations of Sauger, Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass, Crappies and Channel Catfish.

Walleye and Sauger fishing methods change according to the season with jigs and minnows working best early as well as throughout the year. Livebait rigs (Lindy Rigs, Bottom Bouncer, Spinners) start to produce as water temps warm with Crankbaits trolled over channels, humps and trees being one of the most productive methods.

These methods listed above will also produce well for Smallmouth Bass. Anglers have excellent luck casting plastics, spinnerbaits and crankbaits into the shoreline and along rock rip rap, behind points, rock and sandbars, areas where smallmouth hold out of the current,

waiting for their next meal to come along.

Largemouth Bass methods are similar to those of the Smallmouth except the baits will be larger.

Salmon fishing in the past has been limited to Lake Oahe because of the cooler temperatures and deeper water needed by Salmon to survive. After last season, Salmon could be found downstream because of the high water.

Salmon can be taken early in the season trolling crankbaits and spoons on shallower water adjacent to deep-water areas. As temperatures warm, Salmon will move to more oxygenated and cooler water, so look for them deep and along the face of the dam.

Crappie and Rock Bass numbers aren't as great as other species found in the Missouri River reservoirs, but can be found at certain times of the year in the backwater areas and bays. Livebait rigs and jigs and minnows account for most of the panfish taken in the lakes.

Anglers after Channel Catfish will find what they're after in the deeper holes, behind and in snag-infested areas. Livebait such as chubs, minnows, shad and crawlers all work well to take

Catfish. Cutbaits made from Gizzard Shad, Creek Chubs, Skipjack and Shrimp on a rig with a slip sinker and large hook also works well when fishing during warmer weather. In areas with less current, stinkbait rigs, a slip sinker, stinkbait worm filled with stinkbait in a cheese, blood or fish flavors will attract and catch channel catfish.

In 2012, look for fishing in the South Dakota Great Lakes to be excellent as all four of the reservoirs should have been restocked with fish coming through the dams and barring any unforeseen disaster, look for excellent fishing with walleye and bass fishing to be some of the best we've ever seen.

For more information on the Great Lakes of South Dakota, check out www.sdgreatlakes.org

Gary, Howey, Hartington, Neb., is the producer/host of the Outdoorsmen Adventures television series and the co-host of Outdoor Adventures radio. Outdoorsmen Adventures can be seen on Fox affiliates in Nebraska South Dakota and Iowa. More information on the outdoors can be found on www.outdoorsmenadventures.com

Public Info Waterfowl Meetings Scheduled

LINCOLN, Neb. — A series of public informational waterfowl zone meetings are scheduled across the state in coming weeks, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Issues include potential changes to the state's duck zone and season split configuration. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2011 changed some criteria for duck zones.

The meeting schedule:
Jan. 9 — Columbus, Izaak Walton League Lodge, 3521 195th St. South, 7 p.m.

Jan. 10 — Omaha, Scheels classroom, 17202 Davenport St., 7 p.m.

Jan. 11 — Lincoln, Hunter Education Office conference room, 4817 N. 56th St., 6 p.m.

Jan. 12 — Ponca, Ponca State Park, 88090 Spur 26E, 7 p.m.

Jan. 16 — Valentine, Niobrara Lodge, 803 E. U.S. Highway 20, 6 p.m.

Jan. 17 — Kearney, Yanney Park, ERC Building, 2005 1st Ave., 6 p.m.

Jan. 23 — McCook, Red Willow Fairgrounds, Community Building, W. 5th and O St., 7 p.m.

Jan. 24 — Gering Civic Center, Chimney Rock meeting room, 1050 M St., 7 p.m.

Jan. 25 — Ogallala, Lake McConaughy Visitors Center, 1475 Neb. Highway 61N, 6 p.m.

Jan. 30 — North Platte, Holiday Inn Express, 300 Holiday Frontage Road, 7 p.m.

"Potentially, this new criteria would allow us to zone in the High Plains area of Nebraska for the first time," said Mark Vrtiska, Game and Parks waterfowl program manager. "These meetings primarily are for letting duck hunters know what the advantages and disadvantages of the new zoning would be, as well as determine any new zone boundaries."

ND's Fargodome, Alerus Center Replacing Turf

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — The Gate City Bank will pay \$1 million to have its name displayed on a newly installed artificial turf field at the Fargodome.

Both the Fargodome and the Alerus Center, in Grand Forks, are replacing their indoor artificial turf fields next year. North Dakota State University plays its home football games at the dome, while the University of North Dakota plays at the Alerus.

Both buildings will use infill turf, a material that has more give and resembles the feel of natural turf.

"That's the new standard for football," said Jeremy Linstad, the Alerus Center's operations manager.

The \$3 million Fargodome turf

replacement project is expected to be finished next summer, said Rob Sobolik, the building's general manager. The field will be called "Gate City Bank Field at the Fargodome" in exchange for the bank's \$1 million.

The dome's branding agreement is for 11 years and includes advertising below the building's scoreboard. Steve Swiontek, the chairman and chief executive officer of Gate City, said the bank and the dome's governing board

have been talking about a sponsorship deal since last spring.

In Grand Forks, the Alerus Center's turf replacement project is expected to cost between \$3.5 million and \$4 million. Linstad said major work will begin in late May and should be finished in August.

There is no naming agreement for the Alerus field. The city's events center commission is negotiating with UND to pay a share of the cost.

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