

S.D. Moves To Remove Eagles From List

PIERRE (AP) — Biologists with South Dakota’s Game, Fish and Parks Department say the bald eagle has soared above the threshold for removing the bird from the state’s list of threatened species.

The bald eagle was de-listed at the federal level in 2007, and Wildlife Diversity Coordinator Eileen Dowd Stuckel said the same should be done at the state level, the *Capital Journal* reported.

South Dakota delayed in removing the birds from its own separate, threatened species list so it could gather more data, Stuckel said. She presented a proposal on Thursday at the monthly meeting of the state Game, Fish and Parks Commission that called for erasing the birds off the register.

Since about 2004, the five-year average of 25 active nests called for in the state’s bald eagle recovery plan has been met, she said. Recent estimates put the number of active bald eagle nests in South Dakota between 140 and 150.

“We felt it no longer qualified for protection,” she said.

Authorities Investigate Suspicious Death

RAPID CITY (AP) — Authorities in Rapid City are investigating what they say is the suspicious death of a 38-year-old man who died Friday morning at an area hospital.

Rapid City police say officers responded to a report of an assault on May 27 on the 700 block of East Anamosa Street. Nearby they found the man unconscious against a retaining wall, suffering from head trauma.

The man was brought to Rapid City Regional Hospital. He died from his injuries Friday morning.

Police have identified several people who may have been present when the man was injured.

Rapid City Police and the Pennington County Sheriff’s Office are continuing to investigate.

1 Person Dies In Helicopter Accident

HUDSON, Iowa (AP) — Authorities say one person was died in an accident involving a helicopter that was undergoing maintenance on the ground at a farm in Black Hawk County.

The Black Hawk County Sheriff’s Office says the person died Friday “while maintenance work was being done on a stationery helicopter” in rural Hudson.

Deputy Tony Meyer says there were no other injuries. The sheriff’s office says it will release the victim’s name after relatives are notified.

Authorities were called to the farm about 10:30 a.m., and officers could later be seen searching a nearby field.

The helicopter’s tail number corresponds with a helicopter owned by Ritel Copter Service. The company was involved in a lawsuit after a helicopter crashed in 2006 during filming of the film, “The Final Season.”

Bail Increased On Murder Suspect

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The girlfriend of a man charged with killing his mother and his 4-year-old half brother is being held on \$5 million bail on authorities’ suspicion that she might have been involved in his mother’s Omaha slaying.

That revelation came out in 24-year-old Gabriela Guevara’s preliminary hearing Friday.

A police homicide detective testified at the hearing that preliminary autopsy results on the body of 45-year-old Jesus Ismenia Marinero indicate she was alive when she was dumped in a southeast Omaha ditch. Police think Guevara helped 25-year-old Roberto Martinez-Marinero load his mother in a car and dump her.

Guevara has been charged with being an accessory. Prosecutors say that if final autopsy results show Marinero was alive when she was dumped, they will charge Guevara with aiding and abetting first-degree murder.

Minneapolis Repeals Laws On Spitting

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Minneapolis wiped away ordinances Friday that banned lurking and spitting in the city, responding to critics who said the local laws unfairly targeted minorities.

The Minneapolis City Council voted 12-1 to repeal the ordinances, which Mayor Betsy Hodges called antiquated and unnecessary.

But council President Barb Johnson — who cast the lone no vote — said the lurking law allowed police to stop people before they committed crimes in neighborhoods like the north-side ward she represents. She said she worried that disorderly conduct or curfew laws could be the targets.

“My citizens — when they’re contacting me — are concerned about people in their alleys,” Johnson said. “People are sometimes carjacked out of alleys.”

The head of the city’s police union, Lt. Bob Kroll, also opposed the repeal, saying the law was a useful tool for preventing more serious crimes. Minneapolis police said they made 89 arrests for lurking and one for spitting in 2014.

Advocacy groups targeted the ordinances after high-profile shootings in other cities raised tension between police and citizens. And a recent American Civil Liberties Union report found that people arrested for low-level crimes in Minneapolis were nearly nine times more likely to be black or Native American than white.

Miski Noor, an activist with Black Lives Matter Minneapolis, said the repeals move the city a step closer toward racial equity. But Noor said comprehensive reform of the criminal justice system is still needed.

St. Paul prohibits loitering or lurking with the intent to commit specific crimes, such as prostitution or selling drugs. The city also has a law against spitting.

Neb. Death Penalty Supporters Expand Campaign Coalition

BY GRANT SCHULTE
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — A petition drive to place Nebraska’s death penalty on the ballot was set to begin Saturday with paid and volunteer circulators hitting the streets in Omaha, Lincoln and dozens of counties.

The group Nebraskans for the Death Penalty was training circulators and printing thousands of petitions on Friday after receiving certified copies from the Secretary of State’s office.

Organizers have to gather roughly 57,000 signatures of registered voters by Aug. 27 to place the law on the ballot, and 115,000 to suspend the law before voters decide in November 2016. They also must gather signatures from at least 5 percent of the registered voters in 38 of Nebraska’s 93 counties.

The group formed after Nebraska lawmakers voted last month to repeal capital punishment, overturning Gov. Pete Ricketts’ veto.

The ballot campaign “will firmly establish that the people of Nebraska want this on the books, and expect to have it carried out,” said State Treasurer Don Stenberg, the new group’s co-chairman.

Nebraskans for the Death Penalty spokesman Chris Peterson said he didn’t yet know how many paid and volunteer circulators will participate, but organizers were pleasantly surprised by the initial response.

Unlike last year’s suc-



METRO GRAPHICS

cessful minimum wage ballot campaign, the death penalty drive is likely to face organized resistance.

Peterson said he anticipates a blocking campaign, where opponents try to prevent a measure from getting on the ballot by urging the public not to sign or catching circulators in violation of state law.

Any group that does so will have to register with the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission once it raises, receives or expends more than \$5,000 in a year, said Frank Daley, the commission’s executive director. Daley said his office has already received inquiries from groups that would oppose the ballot measure.

Death penalty opponents plan to present their case to the public with a coalition likely to include faith leaders and Nebraskans who have watched the murderers of their friends and loved ones sit for decades on death row.

“We’re definitely going to be involved,” said Stacy Anderson, executive director of Nebraskans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty. Anderson questioned whether voters would support keeping the death penalty given the cost, time spent on appeals and the state’s inability to carry out executions.

Earlier Friday, petition-drive organizers announced endorsements from Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert and the Nebraska County Attorneys Association. State Sen. Beau McCoy of Omaha and Stenberg, a former attorney general, will serve as honorary co-chairs of the campaign.

Stenberg — who served as attorney general from 1991 to 2003 — said he believes the death penalty can still function in Nebraska, despite repeated legal challenges and difficulties in obtaining the required lethal injection drugs.

He said that when he took office, Nebraska had not brought a death penalty case to conclusion in more 30 years. But during his tenure, three inmates were executed

Post-Christmas Hunt For Antlerless Deer Axed

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — The additional nine days of doe-only hunting will continue for the East River deer season but will be stopped for the West River deer season in South Dakota this year, the state Game, Fish and Parks Commission decided Friday.

Further, the doe-only hunt will be allowed in just those East River counties where the deer populations are sufficient to support more does killed. Essentially the doe-only hunt will be confined to a block of 20 north-central counties this year.

The doe-only hunt starts the Saturday after Christmas. It is for hunters who didn’t fill their East River licenses.

Commissioner Scott Phillips of rural New Underwood strongly argued for eliminating the late-season hunt for at least the West River counties. He said there is landowner fatigue by that point in the year.

Phillips said hunters are killing some bucks that have shed their antlers dur-

ing that late season. He said landowners feel they must be home during the deer season so they can address trespassers.

Phillips said he would be willing to consider a doe-only hunt as part of the West River season in the future if it is held on either side of the main West River season, which this year will run Nov. 14 through Nov. 29.

The main East River deer season will be Nov. 21 through Dec. 6, plus the additional nine days in late December and early January for does only.

The commission set the various deer seasons Friday. The Black Hills firearms season will be Nov. 1 through Nov. 30. The archery season will be Sept. 26 through Jan. 15, 2016.

Commissioner Cathy Peterson of Salem said the doe-only, or antlerless, season should be handled in different ways.

She said East River hunters and landowners need the doe-only hunt to remain available, especially if the weather is rough during the main season.

“I heard from a lot of people in my part of the state that that’s the week the

landowner will let them hunt and they need the meat,” Peterson said.

She added, “I do feel that, East River it’s a tool, that’s a very important tool.”

Commissioner Barry Jensen of White River said he doesn’t think the late-season doe is effective and there is landowner fatigue.

“At the end of the year you’re glad it’s over, quite frankly,” Jensen said. “So it’s always been a thorn in my side to have that after the first of the year.”

Jensen said he doesn’t oppose the doe hunt if it is necessary but it could be held at other points in the year that would be more effective.

Commission chairman John Cooper of Pierre said it might be clearest to keep the nine days for the East River season and eliminate the nine days for the West River season. Cooper said the results then can be compared.

Phillips said he liked the Cooper suggestion. “The Missouri River is a pretty good line of demarcation. It’s not like a county road,” Phillips said.

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NEW JUNE TOWN HALL MEETINGS!

Tues. June 9	CITY	LOCATION
8:30 AM	Yankton SD	Minerva’s
11:00 AM	Elk Point SD	The Point Event Ctr.
2:00 PM	Jackson NE	Lariat
5:00 PM	Wayne	Cobblestone Hotel

Wed. June 10

8:30 AM	Plainview	Community Ctr.
11:00 AM	O’Neill	Holiday Inn Exp
2:00 PM	Stuart	Comm. Ctr.
5:00 PM	Ainsworth	The Golden Steer

Thurs. June 11

8:30 AM	Winner SD	Holiday Inn Exp
11:00 AM	Platte SD	Pizza Ranch
2:00 PM	Parkston SD	Pony Creek Steak House
5:00 PM	Tyndall SD	City Auditorium

Friday June 12

8:30 AM	Freeman SD	Prairie House Rest.
11:00 AM	Canton SD	Pizza Ranch
2:00 PM	Centerville SD	Centerville SD Senior Center

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