

When Available, Winter Wheat Is Attractive For Pheasant Nests

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE - The state Game, Fish and Parks Department sees more winter wheat as a way to produce more pheasants in South Dakota.

That's one of the new recommendations made by GFP upland game biologists in their proposed update to the department's pheasant management plan.

A recent study found winter wheat fields were as effective as idle grasslands for pheasant nesting areas.

GFP officials and other wildlife advocates increasingly expressed concerns in the past decade as farmers began growing crops on tens of thousands of acres that had been idled in the federal Conservation Reserve Program.

Research now suggests winter wheat is an acceptable alternative to CRP grasslands for pheasant nesting and brood rearing.

Winter wheat is planted in the fall, begins to grow and reaches maturity the following summer. It can provide undisturbed cover for pheasants through much of the April-May to July-August nesting period before crop harvest.

Anecdotally, in years when winter wheat failed on a widespread basis in South Dakota, such as 2013 and 2006, pheasant numbers dropped sharply in those same areas.

Crop insurance now is available statewide for winter wheat. But the

challenges of producing strong-quality winter wheat dissuade many farmers from keeping it in their crop rotation.

While a South Dakota State University graduate student, Brian Pauly conducted the study in eight townships of Lyman County during 2011 and 2012.

He now works for GFP as a private lands habitat biologist at the department's Huron office.

Pauly used radio tracking systems to monitor hen pheasants as they nested and then to follow their broods after chicks hatched.

His results showed the choice of winter wheat or idle grasslands didn't appear to affect survival of hens during nesting or the survival of their broods after hatching.

"As such, land managers should consider winter wheat a viable option for pheasant habitat during spring/summer months," Pauly wrote in his 2014 master thesis.

He added, "Winter wheat is planted in the fall, undisturbed during spring, and one of the earliest crops to begin growing; hence, land managers should consider it high quality pheasant nesting cover."

Of the hens collared with radio transmitters, 59 of them were located in idle grasslands, 35 were in winter wheat, 12 in spring wheat, and 17 in other landuse types, Pauly reported.

For comparison, he looked for nest sites of hens that weren't collared.

"Idle grasslands, winter wheat fields, spring wheat fields, and roadways were

used for nest sites at higher proportions than available on the landscape," he found.

"Pheasant nest sites occurred in lower proportions in croplands, residential areas, and pasture habitats."

He concluded that winter wheat is not a sustainable alternative to idle grassland nesting cover but should be viewed as a resource capable of adding additional nesting habitat for pheasants.

"Large-scale winter wheat incentives may provide wildlife managers with a means to increase additional nesting acres on the landscape, while providing agricultural producers with an additional profit for planting winter wheat," he wrote.

Pauly didn't find any pheasants that nested in actively growing corn, milo, soybean, or sunflower fields.

"Since row crops do not provide adequate nesting habitat for pheasants, pheasant populations will decline in central South Dakota if row crop acreage continues to increase," he noted.

The proposed management plan is available on the Internet at <http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting/docs/pheasant-mngmnt-plan.pdf>.

More information from GFP about pheasants, including an address to send comments about the management plan, is at http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting/small-game/pheasants.aspx?utm_source=iContact&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=GFP%20News&utm_content=.

Officials Want New Fire Dept. Name

RAPID CITY (AP) — The top fire official in Rapid City wants a new name for the Rapid City Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

Rapid City Fire Chief Mike Maltaverne tells KEVN-TV that fire officials want to readopt the name of Rapid City Fire Department. The agency changed its name in 2002 when it took over the city's ambulance service.

The department is staffed by more than 130 people.

Maltaverne says the department is working to become accredited and a way to do so is not only by changing its name, but also by revising its mission and changing the titles of some officials. He says the three assistant chiefs in the department will now be referred to as division chiefs.

Maltaverne says the mayor and city council support the changes.

Fed. Loans, Grant To Help Rural Business

HURON (AP) — Three organizations in South Dakota will receive a portion of the \$12.5 million in loans and grants that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is handing out to assist businesses in rural areas.

The federal agency says Northeast Council of Governments Development Corporation in Aberdeen, South Eastern Development Foundation in Sioux Falls and Northern Electric Cooperative Inc. in Bath will receive funds that are expected to create jobs and promote entrepreneurship.

The Northeast Council of Governments and the South Eastern Development Foundation will receive loans of more than \$485,000 and \$325,000, respectively, to provide low-interest loans for business and community development.

Meanwhile, Northern Electric Cooperative will get a \$300,000 grant to purchase and renovate a building in a medical and dental clinic.

Brookings To Form Housing Task Force

BROOKINGS (AP) — City leaders in Brookings want to form a task force to study affordable housing options in the area.

The Brookings Register reports the city has long struggled with a housing shortage and residents are frustrated by the lack of affordable options.

City Councilor Patty Bacon says the city doesn't have enough single-family dwellings for moderate incomes. She says real estate developers cannot build houses at or below \$150,000 to make them affordable to most middle-income residents.

Bacon says the average Brookings family makes between \$2,773 and \$3,120 in gross income per month, and 15 percent of renters pay over 50 percent of income in rent, more than the recommended 30 percent.

The city's council will bring forth the Affordable Housing Task Force Charter during its last meeting in November.

Avera Wins Wrongful Termination Lawsuit

MITCHELL (AP) — A jury in South Dakota has ruled in favor of Avera Health in a wrongful termination lawsuit filed by an ophthalmologist.

The Daily Republic reports the decision came following a trial in Mitchell prompted by the lawsuit Dr. Sonia Hernandez filed after she was fired from Avera Queen of Peace Hospital in 2012.

Hernandez's lawsuit claimed her termination was a breach of her three-year contract guaranteeing her \$300,000 a year. The jury denied her request for \$765,000 in reparation.

Attorneys for Avera said Hernandez was fired after complications arose from three of six cataract surgeries she performed on October 2011. Defense attorney Lisa Marso says safe patient care is of primary importance to Avera.

Hernandez attorney argued the hospital's equipment, instruments and staff were to blame for the complications.

Lincoln Police Identify Boy Who Drowned

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A 3-year-old boy who drowned in a backyard Lincoln pool has been identified.

The Lincoln Journal Star reports Lincoln Police identified the boy as Charles Murphy.

The boy was found in a backyard pool around 11 a.m. Saturday. He was taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead at 12:45 p.m.

Lincoln Police Capt. Don Scheinost says it's unclear how long the boy was in the pool before he was discovered.

Omaha Man Convicted In Sexual Assault

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A 20-year-old Omaha man is awaiting sentencing for the February 2014 rape of a 16-year-old girl.

The Omaha World-Herald reports that Javohn Templeman was convicted of first-degree sexual assault on Friday. He could be sentenced to up to 50 years in prison in January.

Another man, Nicholas Bregg, pleaded no contest to second-degree sexual assault and faces up to 10 years in prison.

Authorities believe the girl was drugged at a party, and then Templeman and Bregg both sexually assaulted her after she was unconscious.

Prosecutors offered both men deals because of concerns about how the case was handled. The defendants weren't arrested until nearly a year afterward.

Hunts For Antlerless Deer Set

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is offering special hunts for antlerless deer at three eastern Nebraska parks.

Archery hunts at Mahoney and Platte River state parks are set for Nov. 30-Dec. 3, Dec. 7-10 and Dec. 14-17.

The archery hunts at Schramm Park State Recreation Area are set for Nov. 30-Dec. 3, Dec. 7-10, Dec. 14-17, Jan. 4-7 and Jan. 11-14.

The muzzleloader hunts at Mahoney and Platte River state parks are set for Jan. 4-7 and Jan. 11-14.

Applications will be accepted through 5 p.m. on Friday. Hunters may obtain applications at OutdoorNebraska.org. Successful applicants and interested alternates must attend orientation sessions in order to receive access permits.

Orientation sessions will be held Nov. 23 at Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium for archers and Dec. 15 for muzzleloaders.

Nebraska

Deputy Serves Up Food In Side Job

BY ANDREA LARSON
The Norfolk Daily News

MADISON, Neb. (AP) — Ross Bartlett has plenty on his plate, and now he'd like to fill some bellies as a result.

The Madison County sheriff's deputy recently started a food truck business, and his offerings are definitely unusual for this corner of the state.

Frog legs and savory "meal cones" are the stars of Bartlett's Code 3 Catering, which operates out of a repurposed fire equipment truck.

"I don't want to ... have my food be something people have got to have because it's the only thing (at an event) to eat. I want to be unique and different," Bartlett told *The Norfolk Daily News*.

Though his truck — named for the fire department's code for lights and sirens — draws attention on its own with its working emergency lights, Bartlett has worked hard to make his food the star of the show.

"I went to a food service distributor show, where you do nothing but eat the whole time and see everything that's available," Bartlett said. "I went there to just basically get ideas. ... I wanted something weird and different, and I came across a guy that sells stuff like gator meat and frog legs that are farm-raised."

Not having seen frog legs on the menu of other food trucks in the area, he decided to see how the dish would sell around here.

"I have a seasoned batter that I made up myself, so I batter them and deep-fat fry them," Bartlett said. "More females than males, surprisingly, want to try them."

Frog legs sold well at this summer's Thunder By the River event in Wisner, Nebraska, as did loaded baked potatoes and Idaho tacos — a large baked potato covered in taco toppings.

Bartlett, who also works as a volunteer firefighter and EMT as well as part-time at the Madison and Newman Grove police departments, said his biggest seller this

summer were his meal cones.

"The cone is made out of bread, about seven inches tall and a pretty good-sized circumference that you can probably put eight ounces of product in or more. In the hot beef dinner cone, I fill it with roast beef, a little layer of mashed potatoes, more roast beef, a ladle of gravy and a scoop of potatoes on the top. I drizzle gravy over the top of it and put a cherry tomato on it.

"With the bacon mac and cheese cone, I use what's called pizza bacon, which is to die for. I put that in the macaroni and cheese and fill the cone."

The process of figuring out what to sell at different venues has been trial and error, Bartlett said, and some dishes just don't seem to go over. A spaghetti and meatball cone has been nixed from the menu, though simple snow cones have proved to be major hit.

"Every time you go somewhere, something will sell at one event, and it won't sell at another event. I've figured

some of it out though. If I go to an auction, I do hot dogs, chili dogs, nachos, drinks. But if I go to a big event like a fair, I'm going to have my hot beef dinner cones, my frog legs — something people can't get at every other food truck," Bartlett said.

His wife, Tina, helps him run the truck, as well as his daughter and son-in-law. Bartlett said he refers to the seasonal business as his retirement plan, though his wife jokingly calls Code 3 Catering his mid-life crisis.

As the colder weather moves in, Bartlett is about done working his food truck this year, but he is always available by request for auctions or special events, he said.

"The food truck craze is a unique niche that people are interested in. And the nice thing is, I can go to places that aren't set up for electricity and stuff — I can go to a farm, pull up and start my generator and half an hour later, I'm serving food."

Film Narrates Efforts To Preserve Lakota Language

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO
Associated Press

SIoux FALLS — A documentary that chronicles efforts on reservations in North Dakota and South Dakota to save the language of the Lakota people is set to premiere on public television stations nationwide in November.

The 55-minute film "Rising Voices" highlights how classroom instruction and immersion preschools, dictionaries, voice recordings and animated cartoons are being used to preserve the Lakota language, which is estimated to be spoken by fewer than 6,000 people — less than 14 percent of the Lakota population in North and South Dakota — with an average age that will soon reach 70.

In the documentary, a wide range of Lakota people and some non-Native Americans who have learned the language share the successes and challenges they've faced in furthering the reach of the tongue.

"The Lakota are the most iconic of American Indians," said producer Larry Hott. "They are the ones that Hollywood thinks of; the Lakota have

the headdresses, and the buffalo, and the teepee, and Sitting Bull. So, in the American imagination, this is what an American Indian looks like.

"This is a community that's very famous, that's iconic, that's actually known around the world, and here you have a language that was once spoken by many, many more thousands than those who speak it now. There's only 6,000 speakers left. That creates a race against time."

The film addresses what is now seen as a dark moment in federal education mandates: the assimilation policy that forced Native American children into boarding schools, where students were forced to speak English and were punished when they were caught speaking in their native tongues. The policy inherently limited or erased the Lakota fluency of some Native Americans who later were unable or refused to teach it to their children and the children of their children.

"I wasn't able to speak Lakota to my own children because I was afraid for them and what shame they would have to go through," Philomine Lakota said in the film, her voice cracking. "I was

afraid that they would be rejected in their education system and go through the punishments that I went through."

A Lakota immersion program in Fort Yates, North Dakota, highlighted by the documentary had 11 children between the ages of 3 and 5 when the film crew visited. Enrolled students traveled from Bismarck and other areas, some making a two-hour round trip every day.

In another effort, a basketball coach tells how he began to incorporate Lakota words during practices for shoot, pass, dribble, miss and rebound.

Philomine Lakota is now a Lakota teacher at Red Cloud Indian High School in Pine Ridge, where students take daily classes in Lakota and she encourages them to fight for the "biggest battle of their lives," which she believes is the one to preserve their language.

"There are days when we have real good days and they just start speaking Lakota on their own, and my heart swells with pride, and I say we have hope, we have hope, I have hope, I have hope, they are doing it and I don't want to break their momentum," she said. "Those are rare."

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