



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



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Current topics and issues affecting outdoor recreation in our State. Prepared by the North Dakota Chapter, The Wildlife Society, and the North Dakota Wildlife Federation.

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Creative Access

Access to North Dakota's valuable outdoor resources requires creative methods. North Dakota Game and Fish Department's **Private Land Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS)** program has partnered with a North Dakota ranch family to provide public access to over 20,000 acres of prime hunting land in the North Dakota Badlands. Contributing partners included, Pheasants Forever, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, in addition to the Mule Deer Foundation which provided livestock management infrastructure through their Outdoor Heritage Fund "Western ND Habitat Enhancement Project" grant. Because there was a willing landowner, and multiple conservation partners, it became possible to open a large tract of private land for hunting access for 10 years.

In 2017 alone, the harvest of fifteen elk, numerous mule deer, sharp-tailed grouse, prairie dogs, turkeys and countless hours of hunting opportunity were made possible by this one landowner's willingness to participate in the **PLOTS** program.

Hunting access is becoming increasingly limited, and these PLOTS tracts help to ensure the preservation of North Dakota's hunting heritage. Additionally, these projects provide landowners with a diversified economic benefit and nearby communities with benefits from an influx of hunter dollars into their economies. N. D. sportsmen and women show their support by thanking landowners for providing access and being on their best behavior while hunting PLOTS and all private land.

It is important that our state legislators understand the importance of the Outdoor Heritage Fund and public access programs for wildlife, hunters, landowners, and economic development. It is also important for our Congressional Delegation to support the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program portion of the 2018 Farm Bill. All these voluntary programs are good for sportsman and women, landowners and main street North Dakota.

For more information on this message or other conservation topics, contact: 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)

