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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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### Maintaining Our Hunting Tradition

Hunting in North Dakota is at a crossroads. The majority of North Dakota's hunting population are older, white males. Over the next decade, with this demographic there will be a significant reduction in hunting participation, as well as the associated economic impact of reduced sportsmen dollars spent at small town main streets and related businesses. Efforts are underway across the nation to **Recruit** new hunters, **Retain** those that still hunt, and **Reactivate** those that have left the sport, a strategy commonly called **R3**. In North Dakota, the Game and Fish Department recognized that we have a looming problem and has begun to concentrate their efforts on **R3**.

But **R3** efforts can't succeed if game populations continue to decline due to habitat loss and access for hunting continues to become more difficult. Therefore, the Legislature should develop and support programs that increase habitat, improve reasonable access and promote programs that enhance the tradition of hunting in North Dakota.

North Dakota's sportsmen and sportswomen can do their part too. Those who hunt can introduce someone to hunting, take someone hunting who hasn't been hunting in some time or invite someone to hunt with you who may be thinking of quitting.

Encouraging new and diversified hunter participation, attention to maintaining the habitat that provides opportunity and access that allows participation will keep North Dakota's oldest tradition strong.

For more information on this message or other conservation topics, contact: Mike McEnroe, Past President, North Dakota Wildlife Federation, ([memcenroe@midco.net](mailto:memcenroe@midco.net)) or Rick Nelson, Past President, North Dakota Chapter, The Wildlife Society, ([bluebill@bis.midco.net](mailto:bluebill@bis.midco.net)). For a complete list of Conservation Notes visit ([www.ndctws.wordpress.com](http://www.ndctws.wordpress.com))-articles.

