



House Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Testimony on HB 1081

North Dakota Game and Fish Department  
Scott Peterson, Deputy Director  
January 15, 2021

Chairman Porter and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Scott Peterson and I'm the Deputy Director of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. I am testifying today in support of HB 1081.

The Department of Trust Lands manages over 700,000 acres of land in North Dakota. Those lands, with a few minor exceptions, are open for recreation to hunters, anglers, and other types of compatible outdoor uses. It's important to our customer base that these lands remain open and are managed and regulated for the benefit of all, including farmers and ranchers. This is partly why our Department is willing to assist them with the enforcement of certain rules on their lands.

If HB 1081 is passed into law, our Department will need to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Trust Lands before we could begin enforcing such rules. That MOA would identify which specific rules we could enforce. We also wish to make it clear that we have no interest in assisting the Department of Trust Lands in any surface management duties, such as livestock management, on those lands. Our interest would be the enforcement of state laws and rules on those lands only. Such laws and rules would likely include off-trail driving, baiting, guiding and outfitting and other hunting related prohibited activities. An agreement to facilitate the Department of Trust Lands to compensate the North Dakota Game and Fish Department will also need to be developed.

For these reasons, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department supports the passage of HB 1081 as currently written.