

TESTIMONY OF JOHN BRADLEY
NORTH DAKOTA WILDLIFE FEDERATION
HOUSE BILL 1017
SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 6, 2025

Chairman Bekkedahl and members of the Senate Appropriations Committee:

For the record, I am John Bradley, Executive Director of the North Dakota Wildlife Federation (NDWF). I'm here today representing our members and affiliated wildlife and sportsmen's clubs across North Dakota that make up the North Dakota Wildlife Federation.

The Game and Fish Department is a special fund agency receiving revenue from game and fish license sales (hunting, trapping, fishing, boating registrations, etc.) and federal funding. They receive no general fund dollars. Sportsmen and women have a proud history of funding the Department and conservation in our state. We are happy to do it and we ask for your strong support of the Game & Fish Department's budget.

As the Committee works through the budget for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, NDWF asks that you support a strong Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) prevention line item within the budget. The efforts of the Game and Fish Department in preventing the spread of ANS will be critical to the future of our infrastructure - dams, water supply, irrigation intakes - as well as our fishing heritage and other recreational pursuits.

Additionally, we'd ask for the Committee's support for the \$4,989,565 enhancement listed under the Land Habitat and Depredation line item. This line item holds the PLOTS Program as well as the Big Game Depredation Program at G&F (a mandate from SB2227 in 2010). In 2024, PLOTS included approximately 836,000 acres. NDWF's members support the goal of reaching over 1 million acres of public hunting access on private land by 2028 which was laid out at the Habitat and Access Summit in December 2024. This line item also includes funds for wildlife habitat management practices, food plots, grass plantings, tree and shrub plantings and other habitat enhancement grants and projects, all which are popular with sportsmen and women.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the North Dakota Game & Fish Department's budget.