

TESTIMONY OF JOHN BRADLEY  
NORTH DAKOTA WILDLIFE FEDERATION  
HOUSE BILL 1470  
HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
February 6, 2025

Chairman Porter and Members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee:

For the record, I am John Bradley, Executive Director of the North Dakota Wildlife Federation (NDWF). NDWF supports HB 1470 and requests a Do Pass recommendation from the committee.

We'd like to thank the bill sponsors for bringing this forward. The ND Game & Fish Department hasn't had a fee increase in over a decade. NDWF feels that an increase is needed in order for the department to fulfill their mission and increase wildlife habitat and access in the state, a goal from their Summit in December of 2024 and a rallying cry from sportsmen across the state. The cost to work with landowners to put quality habitat on the ground, the cost to expand access to our lakes and rivers, and the cost to sign up new PLOTS acres are all going to increase in the future and we want the Department to be financially sound in that process.

Let's be clear, license fee increases alone won't get us to our goal of over a million acres enrolled in PLOTS and the other habitat goals laid out during the Habitat & Access Summit. License fee increases will allow the Department to lead the initiative, partnering with conservation groups, creating programs that work for landowners, and leveraging other pools of state and federal dollars to get us to where we want to go.

Fee increases are never perfect, but we feel that this bill once amended will provide the Department with the needed resources to keep up with the times, while not pricing out hunters and anglers from participating in their outdoor heritage. We have worked with the Department on a few ways to improve the bill and we look forward to working with the Committee on this issue.

We encourage a Do Pass on HB 1470.