

**2025 SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**SB 2216**

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Energy and Natural Resources Committee Room JW 216, State Capitol

SB 2216  
1/30/2025

Relating to waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

3:58 p.m. Chairman Patten opened the hearing.

Members present:

Chairman Patten, Vice Chairman Kessel, Senators: Beard, Boehm, Enget, Gerhardt, and Van Oosting.

### Discussion Topics:

- Proposed amendment
- Restoration stamp fee
- Youth hunting programs
- Tracking hunters
- Funding waterfowl habitat

3:58 p.m. Senator Sean Cleary introduced the bill and submitted testimony in favor #32875.

4:05 p.m. Jack W. Paris testified in favor and submitted testimony #32911.

4:08 p.m. Casey Anderson, Wildlife Division Chief of ND Game and Fish Department, testified in favor and submitted testimony #32699.

4:13 p.m. Nathan Brandt testified in favor.

4:15 p.m. Ryan Taylor, Director of Public Policy for Ducks Unlimited, testified in favor and submitted testimony #32991.

4:21 p.m. Kevin Glatt testified in favor.

4:22 p.m. John Bradley, Executive Director of ND Wildlife Federation, testified in favor and submitted testimony #32909.

4:25 p.m. Warren Swensen testified in opposition and submitted testimony #32219.

4:29 p.m. Kurt Swenson testified in opposition and submitted testimony #31423.

### Additional written testimony:

Andrew Carlson, ND Waterfowl and Agriculture Association, submitted testimony in favor #31513.

Joseph W. Carlson, ND Waterfowl and Agriculture Association, submitted testimony in favor #31517.

Connor Neva, NDWAA, submitted testimony in favor #31522.

Nick Surma submitted testimony in favor #32910.

Adam Justinger submitted testimony in favor #32922.

Matthew Aberle, Board Member, NDWAA, submitted testimony in favor #32953.

Paul H. Myerchin submitted testimony in favor #32970.

Brayn K. Jockhim submitted testimony in favor #32973.

Benjamin Peterson submitted testimony in favor #32781.

Preston Ripplinger submitted testimony in opposition #31751.

Sheldon B. Cieslak, President & Lobbyist of Hazen Sportsmen, submitted testimony in opposition #32631.

4:31 p.m. Chairman Patten adjourned.

*Kendra McCann, Committee Clerk*

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Testimony on SB 2216 (IN OPPOSITION)

Kurt Swenson, Beulah, ND District 33

Chairman Patten, Vice Chairman Kessel and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Kurt Swenson from Beulah. I am an avid outdoorsman, enjoying the pursuit of game that North Dakota offers us on our own property and that of neighbors and friends.

I am highly supportive of waterfowl habitat improvements and youth hunting programs. We invest significant time and money improving habitat on our property and by supporting our local Pheasants Forever Chapter. We host youth hunting events every year on our property and support various Learn to Shoot and Learn to Hunt events in our local community.

I am concerned with SB 2216 as it is currently written for two reasons:

- The stamp and associated fee **do not apply to non-resident** small game or waterfowl hunters. Why should they enjoy the benefit of the waterfowl habitat improvements generated by this funding source without having to contribute?
- With our proud history of NDGF being a primarily user-based funding model, why should this generation of funds fall solely on the backs of small game hunters? It would be best if we applied to all license types (OR NOT AT ALL)
  - o Many small game hunters DO NOT pursue waterfowl. While waterfowl habitat improvements are generally beneficial to small game and big game in addition to waterfowl, individuals that purchase Combination, Big Game and Spring Light Goose Conservation Season licenses may not be contributing all for this benefit.
  - o Youth hunting programs lead to all types of hunters, all types of hunting licenses should contribute towards this noble effort.

I recommend you consider amending this bill in one of two ways:

- Limit the imposition of this stamp and fee strictly for waterfowl hunters (resident and non-residents), OR
- Impose this as a license pre-requisite, similar to the current Fishing, Hunting, Furbearer Certificate and General Game and Habitat License so that everyone contributes.

If the bill remains as written, I respectfully ask you to vote DO PASS vote on HB 1574.

Dear legislators,

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony. I am writing in support of Bill SB2216.

I believe this bill will provide much needed funding for North Dakotas youth hunting initiative. It also provides funding for habitat and conservation, which will directly improve the resident hunting experience. Lastly, this bill will provide a much needed mechanism for the North Dakota Game and Fish to accurately determine the number of resident waterfowl hunters.

The small price of \$10 for a resident waterfall stamp will have a very positive impact on our youth and resident waterfowl experience. Thank you for your time.

Andrew Carlson

Dear legislators;

Thank you so much for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of bill SB 2216.

Back in the 1970s there were over 40,000 resident waterfowl hunters and approximately 5,000 nonresidents. In 2024 there were approximately 16,000 resident waterfowl hunters and approximately 30,000 nonresidents. I say approximately 16,000 resident waterfowl hunters because we currently have no way to measure us.

The fastest growing sport in North Dakota is the shooting sports. Our youth are having an incredibly difficult time translating their shooting skills to the field. The reasons are multifactorial. North Dakotas waterfowl habitat continues to shrink. Secondly our residents are simply getting outcompeted. There are almost 2 nonresidents for every resident waterfowl hunter. Hunting land is being purchased and leased by out of state interests at an alarming rate. For example, over 20,000 acres of prime waterfowl hunting land have been purchased in McLean county alone over the last few years. Also some of our youth lack mentors to take them.

A resident waterfowl license would serve several purposes. Monies generated would be used to provide desperately needed youth hunting opportunities. Secondly funds would be used to restore our constantly shrinking waterfowl habitat within the state. A third benefit would be to provide the North Dakota Game and Fish with a mechanism to determine definitively how many resident waterfowl hunters there are in the state.

Thank you for considering my testimony. Please let me know if I can provide any more information.

Sincerely,

Joseph W Carlson

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony in support of Bill SB2216.

The addition of a small \$10 license for resident waterfowl hunters will give the state and Game and Fish much needed data on total resident waterfowl hunters. The funding created by this license will not only help conservation and habitat, but will hopefully also help in providing a better overall hunting experience for youth and resident waterfowl hunters.

Thank you for considering our youth and resident hunters, who are so important to our local economies and the long tradition of hunting in our great state.

Connor Neva

## Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

## Testimony on SB 2216

Chairman Patten, Vice Chairman Kessel, and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Preston Ripplinger, and I am submitting this testimony in opposition to SB 2216. While the intent behind this legislation is laudable, the bill as drafted imposes an inequitable financial burden on resident hunters and fails to optimize the revenue potential for waterfowl habitat improvements.

SB 2216 seeks to create and enact a new section within Chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code to establish a "waterfowl habitat improvement fund." This fund would be financed through the implementation of a "waterfowl habitat restoration stamp," with the costs borne by resident hunters. This approach raises significant concerns about fairness, fiscal responsibility, and missed opportunities for broader revenue generation.

As a committed advocate for conservation and an active participant in wildlife preservation efforts for over 25 years, I fully support initiatives to enhance waterfowl habitat and expand hunting programs. These efforts are essential for preserving North Dakota's natural resources and fostering the next generation of conservationists. However, while the goals of SB 2216 align with these values, the mechanism for achieving them is fundamentally flawed. It is imperative that any legislation aimed at conservation funding be both equitable and effective.

The fiscal note provided by the North Dakota Game and Fish Department estimates that SB 2216, as currently structured, would generate approximately \$264,000 per biennium. This amount is insufficient to meaningfully advance the stated objectives of the bill. Furthermore, the exclusive reliance on resident hunters to finance this fund is inherently inequitable.

A more comprehensive funding strategy, including contributions from resident combination license holders and non-resident hunters, could yield significantly greater revenue. Based on data from the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, such an approach could generate over \$2,000,000 per biennium. This adjustment would ensure that all beneficiaries of North Dakota's waterfowl habitat, including non-residents, share in the responsibility of its preservation.

From a policy perspective, SB 2216 raises questions about proportionality and fairness. The disproportionate financial burden placed on resident hunters could be construed as an arbitrary and capricious approach to conservation funding, potentially undermining public trust and support for similar initiatives in the future.

Additionally, by failing to include non-resident hunters in the funding framework, the bill overlooks a significant source of revenue and neglects an opportunity to align with broader principles of fiscal equity.

Given these concerns, I strongly recommend that the committee issue a "do not pass" recommendation for SB 2216 in its current form. I urge the committee to consider revising the bill to incorporate a more equitable and comprehensive funding model, ensuring that financial responsibility is appropriately distributed among all stakeholders. By doing so, we can achieve the dual objectives of robust conservation funding and equitable policy implementation.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Respectfully,  
Preston Ripplinger  
Bismarck, ND  
District 33



## Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

## Testimony on SB 2216

Chairman Patten, Vice Chairman Kessel, and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Warren Swenson. I am a concerned sportsman from Bismarck, and I am testifying today in **opposition of SB 2216**.

SB 2216 stands today to create and enact a new section of North Dakota Century Code, chapter 20.1-03, creating a “waterfowl habitat improvement fund”. It will be funded by a “waterfowl habitat restoration stamp” which, as the bill reads today, has been unfairly placed on the backs of resident hunters.

Committee members, let me be clear, I am absolutely in favor of extra funding for waterfowl habitat improvements and youth hunting programs. I have been an active member of conservation organizations for over 15 years, and I stand here today because of the love I gained for the outdoors because of the youth hunting programs I attended. I have been influenced by these programs and conservation organizations so much that I pursued a career in Natural Resources and Rangeland Ecology. I have dedicated my entire working and volunteering career to fundraising and educating around wildlife conservation.

I am testifying in opposition today because this bill could be much more effective. ND Game and Fish has released a fiscal note proposing that this bill will generate approximately \$264,000 each biennium for this fund. I do not believe that our resident small game license purchasers should be the only group to pay into this fund. For example, I am an avid waterfowl hunter myself, but I purchase the resident combination license yearly and as the bill stands today, I would not be required to purchase a stamp. If we included resident combination and non-resident license purchases, this fund could generate over 2 million dollars per biennium. I have included my own fiscal breakdown below using data directly from North Dakota Game and Fish Department’s website.

ND Game and Fish Licenses	Sold in 2022	Sold in 2023	Potential Funds Generated per Biennium
Resident Small Game	12,724	13,203	\$259,270
Resident Combination	63,801	61,228	\$1,250,290
Non-Resident Waterfowl	23,062	26,337	\$493,990
Non-Resident Small Game	21,209	25,985	\$471,940
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$2,475,490</b>

Lastly, I believe that this committee should be concerned about how, when, and where this money will be spent. There needs to be checks and balances built into this bill. I believe that the spirit of this bill has potential, but many adjustments need to be made.

In conclusion, I urge a recommendation of **do not pass** as this bill stands today. Thank you for your time and I will stand for any questions.

Warren Swenson

Bismarck, ND

District 7

The Hazen sportsmen oppose SB 2216, the \$10 license for waterfowl hunters. Although we support youth programs and habitat enhancement we feel it is not proper to single out waterfowl hunters for these two endeavors.

Waterfowl hunters must already Purchase a federal duck stamp plus the same license that upland game bird hunters must purchase. Upland hunters do not have to purchase a Federal Stamp nor a separate State upland game license for any reason including for habitat or youth programs.

We realize narrowing down who hunts waterfowl can make easier to identify who is hunting waterfowl but do we need a \$10 fee to do this?

The fact that the Game and Fish is looking to increase the fee for all licenses this session we feel this is not the proper time to create an additional license.

Sincerely,

Sheldon Cieslak,

President, Hazen Sportsmen



Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Testimony on SB 2216

North Dakota Game and Fish Department  
Casey Anderson, Wildlife Division Chief  
January 30, 2025

Chairman Patten and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Casey Anderson, and I serve as the Wildlife Division Chief for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (Department). I am testifying today in support of SB 2216.

This bill, if the proposed amendment is adopted, would enable the Department to better identify and track resident waterfowl hunters. Currently, we estimate the number of active resident waterfowl hunters (16,459 in 2023) from a much larger pool of small game license holders (74,161 in 2023). A specific waterfowl license will allow the Department to accurately determine hunter activity and harvest, reducing the need for broad harvest surveys while increasing response rates and data accuracy. Furthermore, this legislation would add dollars to the Department to work on increasing habitat for waterfowl as well as increase support for youth hunting programs. For these reasons the Department would ask the committee to adopt the offered amendment and give the amended SB 2216 a do pass recommendation from this committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Dear legislators,

I appreciate you taking the time to read my testimony in support of SB2216.

This bill will raise much needed funding for our youth hunter recruitment efforts to help keep North Dakota's waterfowl hunting heritage going strong. It is shown that resident hunter numbers are in decline, yet youth shooting sports is the fastest growing sport in the state - and we need to capitalize on that. It also will create more funding for habitat and conservation, pivotal players in everyone's waterfowl hunting experience.

Currently North Dakota does not have a black and white way of measuring how many resident waterfowl hunters there actually are in the state. This bill will create a mechanism for gathering that data to help further protect North Dakota's waterfowl hunting legacy and heritage.

It is a small price that I will gladly pay to help our youth hunters, habitat, and data system. It is time to move forward and be proactive in these efforts.

25.1008.01003  
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council  
staff for Senator Cleary  
January 29, 2025

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

### SENATE BILL NO. 2216

Introduced by

Senator Cleary

Representatives Bosch, Porter

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-02 and a new section to  
2 chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to waterfowl habitat restoration  
3 stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

#### 4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 20.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is created  
6 and enacted as follows:

##### 7 **Waterfowl habitat improvement fund.**

8 There is created in the state treasury a special fund known as the waterfowl habitat  
9 improvement fund. The fund consists of transfers and deposits made in accordance with  
10 section 2 of this Act and interest earned on moneys in the fund. Moneys in the fund may be  
11 spent, subject to legislative appropriations, for improving or restoring waterfowl habitat and  
12 supporting youth hunting programs.

13 **SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is created  
14 and enacted as follows:

##### 15 **Waterfowl habitat restoration stamp required - Use of revenue.**

16 A waterfowl habitat restoration stamp is required for every resident ~~small game license and~~  
17 nonresident intending to hunt waterfowl within the state for which a stamp fee of ten dollars  
18 must be charged. ~~The waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fee is in addition to the annual small~~  
19 game license fee charged under section 20.1-03-12. All money generated by waterfowl habitat  
20 restoration stamp fees must be placed in the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

TESTIMONY OF JOHN BRADLEY  
NORTH DAKOTA WILDLIFE FEDERATION  
SENATE BILL 2216  
SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 30, 2025

Chairman Patten and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee:

For the record, I am John Bradley, Executive Director of the North Dakota Wildlife Federation (NDWF).

NDWF supports the intent of the bill, and we urge a Do Pass on SB 2216 once amended. We would like the bill to target waterfowl hunters only (current language includes all small game hunters) and require non-residents to also be included. These changes would increase the funds raised for waterfowl conservation and youth hunting.

A dedicated waterfowl license for North Dakota waterfowlers would serve several purposes. The dollars generated from the license would be used to provide waterfowl habitat with the state, engage the next generation of waterfowl hunters through desperately needed youth hunting opportunities. The last major benefit would be to provide the North Dakota Game and Fish with a tool to determine how many resident vs. non-resident waterfowl hunters there are in the state, creating better data through targeted harvest surveys.

We realize there is another bill on the House side that is addressing broader license fees. NDWF is also supportive of that effort. North Dakota waterfowl hunters have stepped up, met across the state, and are now asking for this waterfowl license. We urge a Do Pass on SB 2216.

## SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

## Testimony in favor of SB 2216

Chairman Patten and members of the Committee:

My name is Nick Surma, and I am a resident of Lincoln, North Dakota. I have been an avid waterfowl hunter since my dad introduced me to the sport when I was 10 years old. North Dakota offers some of the best waterfowl hunting opportunities in North America. However, North Dakota's waterfowl habitat, and more generally waterfowl habitat across the prairie pothole region, has been consistently declining for several decades, reducing waterfowl hunting access and jeopardizing the longevity of premier waterfowl hunting in North Dakota. Senate Bill 2216 offers much needed funding to support conservation efforts for the preservation of North Dakota's wetlands and native prairies, which not only benefit waterfowl, but upland birds and big game as well.

Although I support additional funding for waterfowl habitat conservation efforts, I do not believe residents should be the only ones bearing this burden. North Dakota has seen an extraordinary increase in nonresident waterfowl hunting pressure over the past 10-20 years. This has led to greater hunting competition for residents, while at the same time reducing hunting access. If nonresident waterfowl hunters are coming to North Dakota solely for the purpose of taking advantage of the State's waterfowl habitat and hunting opportunities, nonresidents should also be obligated to purchase the \$10 stamp this bill is proposing. Therefore, I support the proposed amendment to the Bill and would encourage a do pass as amended recommendation. Thank you for considering my testimony and your efforts on SB 2216.

Chairman Patten and Committee Members For the record my name is Jack Paris, I am a life long North Dakotan currently residing in Burleigh County. I am asking for a Do Pass vote on SB 2216. I am a board member of the North Dakota Waterfowl and Agricultural Association but this testimony is from me as a ND waterfowl hunter. I believe this bill as amended will provide our Game & Fish Dept. with valuable information and funding to help them manage our waterfowl resources in the following ways:

1. Currently the G&F dept. does not have a mechanism to accurately count the number of resident waterfowl hunters. They do know that there were almost 30,000 non resident waterfowl hunters this year. The bill will give the G&F an accurate number of resident waterfowl hunters and provide them with a better control group to conduct waterfowl hunting surveys.
2. The funds generated from this stamp will help the G&F slow the rapid decline of our waterfowl habitat.
3. The fund will also provide funding for youth hunting programs. We have an opportunity to slow the decline in our hunting numbers by targeting the hundreds of kids involved in JR & Sr High School trap, skeet and sporting clays. Any way we can get these kids out hunting would be a huge positive. Again I urge you to vote DO PASS on SB 2216, Thank you for your time. Jack Paris



Members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is Adam Justinger. I am an avid waterfowl hunter and resident of North Dakota. I am testifying today as an individual and in support of SB 2216. This bill proposes a small fee (\$10) in the form of a stamp. When I first moved to North Dakota, there were endless opportunities to waterfowl hunt. In recent years, that has changed drastically.

I am hopeful that this small fee will help fund habitat and conservation. More importantly, it is my hope that these fees will help provide more opportunities for our resident youth to be able to get out and enjoy waterfowl hunting. Additionally, this stamp will allow North Dakota Game and Fish to be able to identify how many individuals waterfowl hunt within North Dakota. Based on the current estimations from Game and Fish, nonresidents are outnumbering residents almost two to one, which is concerning. This stamp will help provide the needed data to determine these numbers.

Recently, Senator Cleary introduced proposed amendments to SB 2216 requiring both residents and nonresidents to purchase the stamp. I believe this is appropriate and that all waterfowl hunters should be required to purchase the stamp. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and if you have any other questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

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Adam Justinger

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and Committee Members for taking the time to read my testimony, My name is Matt Aberle.

I am asking for a Do Pass vote on SB 2216. I am a board member of the North Dakota Waterfowl and Agricultural Association but this testimony is from me as a North Dakota Outdoorsman and avid waterfowl hunter. I believe this bill as amended will provide our Game & Fish Dept. with valuable information and funding to help them manage our waterfowl resources in the following ways: 1. Currently the G&F dept. does not have a mechanism to accurately count the number of resident waterfowl hunters. They do know that there were almost 30,000 non resident waterfowl hunters this year. The bill will give the G&F an accurate number of resident waterfowl hunters and provide them with a better control group to conduct waterfowl hunting surveys. 2. The funds generated from this stamp will help the G&F slow the rapid decline of our waterfowl habitat. 3. The fund will also provide funding for youth hunting programs.

We have an opportunity to slow the decline in our hunting numbers by targeting the hundreds of kids involved in JR & Sr High School trap, skeet and sporting clays. Any way we can get these kids out hunting would be a huge positive. Again I urge you to vote DO PASS on SB 2216.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Matt Aberle

Testimony in support of SB 2216

By Paul H. Myerchin

Senator Patten, Chair of the Energy & Natural Resources Committee and Members of this Committee:

I urge this Committee vote in favor of SB 2216 (a waterfowl habitat restoration stamp & youth hunting programs bill) with a “DO PASS” recommendation from this Committee **with amendments to improve SB 2216**. One proposed amendment would be to increase the stamp fee to at least \$15 in order to provide a more meaningful impact on waterfowl habitat restoration projects and youth hunting programs. Additionally, other proposed amendments to the bill would be to require those North Dakota residents buying a “Combination” license (a fishing, hunting, small game & furbearer license) also pay the stamp fee, and to also require all non-residents purchasing a hunting license to pay the stamp fee. My testimony in favor of SB 2216 and the recommended amendments is supported below.

I am a lifelong North Dakota resident having grown up in Grand Forks and now having lived in Bismarck for nearly the past 30 years. My written testimony here is my own personal views, and I am not speaking for anyone else.

First and foremost, I applaud the sponsors of SB 2216, Senator Cleary and Representatives Bosch and Porter. SB 2216 is the first step in the right direction to address the crises we presently have in North Dakota’s great outdoors: the loss of critical habitat and the recruitment of our youth into North Dakota’s strong tradition of hunting.

Second, in order to have a meaningful impact, I recommend this Committee **amend SB 2216 increase the minimum stamp fee to \$15, if not even \$20**. I have been a proud duck hunter for the last 37 hunting seasons, and, God willing, am able to enjoy many more. Duck hunters have a long tradition of “taxing ourselves” to support the waterfowl that are so near and dear to our hearts. Our predecessor duck hunters “taxed” themselves during the height of the Great Depression when they asked Congress to pass the federal duck stamp back in 1934. Also, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., was formed by a small group of duck hunters 88 years ago this week back in 1937, again during the Great Depression. I believe today’s duck hunters will again follow that tradition and gladly pay a few extra dollars to make a meaningful impact for habitat projects that benefit waterfowl.

Additionally, I’m concerned that the \$10 price for the stamp is just “too little too late” for the much larger problem of habitat loss. Back in the late 1990s and


early 2000s, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was a habitat blessing to North Dakota's wildlife and our waterfowl flourished because of that habitat. However, we have been steadily losing habitat over the last 15 years and, in fact, North Dakota now has less CRP acres than Iowa. We need to turn the tide of habitat loss. The time has come to realize that Washington DC politics is not going to bail us out of this habitat problem, and we need to take it upon ourselves to find ways to turn habitat loss around. Also, \$10 just doesn't buy what it used to. One only needs to page through the Cabela's hunting catalog to realize that there is not much you can buy in the sport of duck hunting for \$10. Heck, a quality box of shotgun shells is anywhere from \$20 to \$30/box. A \$15 stamp fee is not going to prevent anyone from duck hunting.

Another positive of this stamp fee is that it will go back to North Dakota's rural landowners that want to voluntarily participate in habitat projects that benefit waterfowl. **This is a win-win-win piece of legislation.** Landowners win by being compensated for habitat projects on their land. Duck hunters win by having more ducks to chase. And the ducks and geese win by having more quality habitat available.

Third, under Section 2 of the bill, line 16, as current written, SB 2216 only imposes this fee when buying a "resident small game license . . . ." It appears, as written, that the fee would not apply to a resident Combination license. If this in fact the case, SB 2216 needs to be amended. For at least the last 25 years, I have purchased a combination license (fishing, hunting, small game, & furbearer license) because I enjoy fishing, deer, and pheasant hunting too. For those that purchase this combination license out of convenience, we should not be able to forgo this fee or not be counted as a resident duck hunter just because we purchase a Combination license. **SB 2216 needs to be amended to read: "a resident small game or combination license . . . ."** Additionally, I also believe that non-resident duck and goose hunters should be required to support habitat projects here in North Dakota as well if they are coming into our state to enjoy North Dakota's resources. I recommend that **SB 2216 also be amended to require non-resident duck and goose hunters purchase this stamp as well and the non-resident stamp fee be set at least \$10 higher than the resident fee.**

Finally, thank you for your consideration of my testimony, and, again, I urge a DO PASS on SB 2216 with the proposed amendments to improve this win-win-win piece of legislation.

Sincerely,  
Paul H. Myerchin  
8725 Spruce Creek Road  
Bismarck, ND 58503



1/30/2025

Chairman Patten and Members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Bryan Jochim residing in Bismarck N.D District 47.

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2216 with the proposed amendment submitted.

Annually the Game and Fish Department publishes a recap of the of Licenses and Permits issued in the State for that operating year. Unfortunately, each year the Resident Waterfowl Licenses sold is blank. When you request that information from the Department, they can only provide an estimate or guesstimate. I believe the proposed Waterfowl Habitat Restoration Stamp will provide the mechanism for the Department to track Resident Waterfowl license sold. I am confident this will provide the Department better fact-based information to make decisions as needed.

The \$10.00 Waterfowl Habitat Restoration Stamp fee will provide needed funding towards increasing waterfowl habitat across the State of N.D. Currently South Dakota has Habitat Stamp (\$10.00) providing funds for Habitat Projects. Also, Montana has a Duck Stamp (\$10.00) to raise awareness and funds for wetland conservation. ND has a tremendous resource with Wildlife and Habitat, and we need to ensure that remains for years to come.

I was part of a team and still on the board of directors that created a non-profit organization called Capital City Young Guns in 2017. CCYG provides an avenue for youth to participate in shotgunning sports by providing education and materials necessary for safe, enjoyable, and successful experiences. CCYG provides instruction with certified instructors, ammunition, targets, and shotguns for use while going through the program with NO Cost to any youth. High School Trap shooting is one of the fastest growing sports in our state currently. Recognizing youth as our future it is important we provide hunting programs to get kids introduced and involved in hunting. We can make that investment through the Waterfowl Habitat Restoration Stamp to ensure the heritage of hunting is intact for years to come.

I am asking for a DO PASS on SB2216.

Bryan Jochim

**Testimony in Support of SB 2216****Ducks Unlimited North Dakota****Ryan Taylor, DU director of public policy****Jan. 30, 2025**

Chairman Patten and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Ryan Taylor, and I'm the director of public policy for Ducks Unlimited in ND, SD and Montana. On behalf of DU, I am testifying in support of SB 2216, a bill to create a state waterfowl habitat stamp and a state waterfowl habitat improvement fund. We do believe there's an unintended error in how the bill was written, and believe the intent was for the waterfowl stamp to be for waterfowl hunters and not all small game license holders. In other states, we call something like this a 'state duck stamp' as it is a state level stamp for duck and waterfowl hunters, and hope that an amendment could remedy that in this bill.

Ducks Unlimited has long supported the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation and the American System of Conservation Funding, a unique "user pays, public benefits" approach that has been the lifeblood of successful scientific wildlife management partnered between the hunting and fishing community and professional biologists and wildlife managers. SB 2216 follows in that model as it pertains to waterfowl hunting in North Dakota, sustaining and improving the habitat that waterfowl depend on for breeding, feeding and migration, and support for the next generation who follow in our hunting heritage. As always, we trust the work of the sponsors, committee, and experts to work out what's appropriate for the details of the fees and the management of the fund itself. Of course, we're happy to speak from our experience in meeting our habitat mission in this state and others around the country if it's helpful in your committee work.

As an organization, Ducks Unlimited is the world leader in wetlands and waterfowl conservation. We are proud to count more than 4,000 North Dakotans as members and nearly 700,000 wetlands and waterfowl enthusiasts as members across the country. DU's mission is habitat that benefits not only waterfowl, but also other wildlife, people, communities and working lands.

We appreciate the efforts of the sponsor, Sen. Cleary, the cosponsors and the others who'll testify today about their work in support of this bill. We are heartened by the enthusiasm for waterfowling and investing in habitat and youth hunting for the betterment of North Dakota, the hunting community, and all who appreciate and enjoy our abundant natural resources.



# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Energy and Natural Resources Committee Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2216  
2/6/2025

Relating to waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

9:43 a.m. Chairman Patten opened the hearing.

Members present:

Chairman Patten, Senators: Beard, Boehm, Enget, Gerhardt, and Van Oosting.  
Vice Chairman Kessel absent.

### Discussion Topics:

- Language changes
- Electronic stamp
- Revenue generated
- Non resident hunters

9:44 a.m. Chairman Patten reintroduced Senator Cleary's proposed amendment, previous testimony #32875.

9:47 a.m. Senator Gerhardt moved proposed amendment testimony # 32875, LC # 25.1008.01003.

9:47 a.m. Senator Enget seconded.

Senators	Vote
Senator Dale Patten	Y
Senator Greg Kessel	A
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Keith Boehm	Y
Senator Mark Enget	Y
Senator Justin Gerhardt	Y
Senator Desiree Van Oosting	Y

Motion Passed 6-0-1.

9:48 a.m. Senator Beard moved a Do Pass as Amended and Rerefer to Appropriation.

9:48 a.m. Senator Boehm seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Dale Patten	Y
Senator Greg Kessel	A
Senator Todd Beard	Y
Senator Keith Boehm	Y
Senator Mark Enget	Y
Senator Justin Gerhardt	Y
Senator Desiree Van Oosting	Y

Motion Passed 6-0-1

9:49 a.m. Senator Van Oosting will carry the bill.

9:49 a.m. Chairman Patten closed the hearing.

*Kendra McCann, Committee Clerk*



For 2/6/25  
1 of 2

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

### SENATE BILL NO. 2216

Introduced by

Senator Cleary

Representatives Bosch, Porter

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-02 and a new section to  
2 chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to waterfowl habitat restoration  
3 stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 20.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is created  
6 and enacted as follows:

7 **Waterfowl habitat improvement fund.**

8 There is created in the state treasury a special fund known as the waterfowl habitat  
9 improvement fund. The fund consists of transfers and deposits made in accordance with  
10 section 2 of this Act and interest earned on moneys in the fund. Moneys in the fund may be  
11 spent~~expended~~, subject to legislative appropriations, for improving or restoring waterfowl habitat  
12 and supporting youth hunting programs. including providing a match for federal funding  
13 obtained by the department.

14 **SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is created  
15 and enacted as follows:

16 **Waterfowl habitat restoration electronic stamp required - Use of revenue.**

17 A waterfowl habitat restoration electronic stamp is required for every resident small game  
18 license and nonresident to hunt waterfowl within the state for which an electronic stamp fee of  
19 ten dollars must be charged. The waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fee is in addition to the  
20 annual small game license fee charged under section 20.1-03-12. All money generated by the

- 1 | waterfowl habitat restoration **electronic** stamp fees must be placed in the waterfowl habitat
- 2 | improvement fund.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE  
SB 2216**

**Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Sen. Patten, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS** ([25.1008.01005](#)) and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2216 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

**2025 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS**

**SB 2216**

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations - Government Operations Division Red River Room, State Capitol

SB 2216  
2/12/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-02 and a new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

9:32 a.m. Chairman Wanzek opened the meeting.

Members present: Chairman Wanzek, Vice-Chair Dwyer, Senator Burckhard, Senator Erbele, and Senator Sickler.

### Discussion Topics:

- Game and Fish Administration of Fund
- Increased Fees
- Fund Allocation
- Depredation
- Private Lands Program
- Small Game and Waterfowl Hunting Licensing
- Resident and Non-Resident Waterfowl Hunter Numbers
- Avian Flu Impact
- Fee Pushback

9:33 a.m. Senator Cleary testified in favor.

9:58 a.m. Chairman Wanzek recessed the meeting.

10:29 a.m. Chairman Wanzek reconvened the meeting.

10:30 a.m. Jeb Williams, ND Game and Fish Director, testified in favor.

11:12 a.m. Senator Erbele moved to amend by reducing the fee from \$10 to \$5.

11:12 a.m. Senator Sickler seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y

Motion Passed 5-0-0.

11:13 a.m. Senator Erbele moved a Do Pass as Amended.

11:13 a.m. Senator Sickler seconded the motion.

<b>Senators</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	N
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y

Motion Passed 4-1-0.

Senator Erbele will carry the bill.

11:17 a.m. Chairman Wanzek closed the meeting.

*Elizabeth Reiten for Carol Thompson, Committee Clerk*

# 2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Appropriations Committee Harvest Room, State Capitol

SB 2216  
2/13/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-02 and a new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

11:26 a.m. Chairman Bekkedahl opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Bekkedahl, Vice-Chairman Erbele, and Senators Burckhard, Cleary, Conley, Davison, Dever, Dwyer, Magrum, Mathern, Meyer, Schaible, Sickler, Sorvaag, Thomas, Wanzek.

### Discussion Topics:

- Increased Fee Rationale
- Resident and Non-Resident Waterfowl Hunter Data Collection
- Non-Resident Hunters Limit Concerns
- Restoration Programs

11:28 a.m. Senator Erbele introduced the bill, the amendment LC 25.1008.02001, and submitted testimony #37630.

11:29 a.m. Senator Erbele moved amendment LC 25.1008.02001.

11:29 a.m. Senator Wanzek seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Brad Bekkedahl	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	N
Senator Sean Cleary	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Jeffery J. Magrum	Y
Senator Tim Mathern	Y
Senator Scott Meyer	Y
Senator Donald Schaible	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ronald Sorvaag	Y
Senator Paul J. Thomas	Y
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y

Motion Passed 15-1-0.

11:32 a.m. Senator Erbele moved a Do Pass as Amended.

11:32 a.m. Senator Wanzek seconded the motion.

<b>Senators</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Senator Brad Bekkedahl	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	N
Senator Sean Cleary	Y
Senator Cole Conley	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Jeffery J. Magrum	N
Senator Tim Mathern	Y
Senator Scott Meyer	N
Senator Donald Schaible	A
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ronald Sorvaag	Y
Senator Paul J. Thomas	N
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y

Motion Passed 11-4-1.

Senator Van Oosting will carry the bill.

11:49 a.m. Chairman Bekkedahl closed the hearing.

*Elizabeth Reiten, Committee Clerk*



February 12, 2025

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO  
FIRST ENGROSSMENT**

**ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2216**

Introduced by

Senator Cleary

Representatives Bosch, Porter

HB  
2/13/25  
1 of 2

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-02 and a new section to  
2 chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to waterfowl habitat restoration  
3 stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 20.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is created  
6 and enacted as follows:

7 **Waterfowl habitat improvement fund.**

8 There is created in the state treasury a special fund known as the waterfowl habitat  
9 improvement fund. The fund consists of transfers and deposits made in accordance with  
10 section 2 of this Act and interest earned on moneys in the fund. Moneys in the fund may be  
11 expended, subject to legislative appropriations, for improving or restoring waterfowl habitat and  
12 supporting youth hunting programs, including providing a match for federal funding obtained by  
13 the department.

14 **SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is created  
15 and enacted as follows:

16 **Waterfowl habitat restoration electronic stamp required - Use of revenue.**

17 A waterfowl habitat restoration electronic stamp is required for every resident and  
18 nonresident to hunt waterfowl within the state for which an electronic stamp fee of ~~ten~~five

- 1 dollars must be charged. All money generated by the waterfowl habitat restoration electronic
- 2 stamp fees must be placed in the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE  
ENGROSSED SB 2216**

**Appropriations Committee (Sen. Bekkedahl, Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS** ([25.1008.02001](#)) and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (11 YEAS, 4 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). SB 2216 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

25.1008.02001  
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council  
staff for Senate Appropriations -  
Government Operations Division  
Committee

February 12, 2025

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO  
FIRST ENGROSSMENT**

**ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2216**

Introduced by

Senator Cleary

Representatives Bosch, Porter

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-02 and a new section to  
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9 improvement fund. The fund consists of transfers and deposits made in accordance with  
10 section 2 of this Act and interest earned on moneys in the fund. Moneys in the fund may be  
11 expended, subject to legislative appropriations, for improving or restoring waterfowl habitat and  
12 supporting youth hunting programs, including providing a match for federal funding obtained by  
13 the department.

14 **SECTION 2.** A new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is created  
15 and enacted as follows:

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17 A waterfowl habitat restoration electronic stamp is required for every resident and  
18 nonresident to hunt waterfowl within the state for which an electronic stamp fee of ~~ten~~five

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly

- 1 dollars must be charged. All money generated by the waterfowl habitat restoration electronic
- 2 stamp fees must be placed in the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

**2025 HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**SB 2216**

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

SB 2216

3/6/2025

Relating to waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

9:42 a.m. Chairman Porter opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Porter, Vice Chairman Anderson, Vice Chair Novak,  
Representatives: Dockter, Hagert, Headland, Heinert, Johnson, Marschall, Olson, Ruby,  
Conmy, Foss

### **Discussion Topics:**

- Improving and restoring habitats
- Promotion for youth hunting
- Wetland habitats
- Resident and Non-Resident fees

9:42 a.m. Senator Cleary introduced the bill and submitted testimony. #38503

9:45 a.m. Nathan Grand, ND Resident, testified in favor.

9:46 a.m. Matt Aberle, ND resident, testified in favor.

9:47 a.m. Ryan Taylor, Policy Director, Ducks Unlimited, testified in favor.

9:49 a.m. John Bradley, Executive Director, ND Wildlife Federation, testified in favor and submitted testimony. #39168

9:51 a.m. Casey Anderson, Wildlife Division Chief, ND Game and Fish, testified in favor and submitted testimony. #39199

### **Additional written testimony:**

Cyrus Baird, Senior Director of Government Affairs, Delta Waterfowl Foundation, submitted testimony in favor. #38491

Paul Myerchin, ND Resident, submitted testimony in favor. #39165

10:05 a.m. Chairman Porter closed the hearing.

*Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk*



February 28, 2025

Chairman Porter  
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Coteau AB Room  
600 E Boulevard Ave, Bismarck, ND 58505

Vice-Chair Anderson  
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Coteau AB Room  
600 E Boulevard Ave, Bismarck, ND 58505

RE: Senate Bill 2216 - *A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 20.1-02 and a new section to chapter 20.1-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.*

Position: SUPPORT

Chairman Porter and Vice-Chair Anderson,

On behalf of Delta Waterfowl members, both in the state of North Dakota and across the United States, I want to thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony in **support of Senate Bill 2216**, legislation that that will create a state waterfowl habitat stamp and establish a state waterfowl habitat improvement fund through the North Dakota Department of Game and Fish (Game and Fish). This legislation passed the North Dakota Senate 39-6 on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

For some background, Delta Waterfowl is the largest organization in North American dedicated to ducks and duck hunters. Founded at the famed Delta Marsh in Manitoba in 1911, with its United States headquarters here in Bismarck, North Dakota, Delta Waterfowl works to promote and protect the continuing tradition of waterfowl hunting across North America – including here in North Dakota.

Waterfowl management and waterfowl hunting in North Dakota is a time-honored tradition. This legislation will help preserve and enhance the habitat essential for waterfowl to thrive across North Dakota by creating additional money for a new state waterfowl habitat improvement fund. Furthermore, it will also help secure a strong future for waterfowl hunting in the state. Delta Waterfowl specifically supports a \$10 cost for the stamp that would, if enacted, result in an estimated \$264,000 of additional revenue per biennium for Game and Fish. Waterfowl hunters have shown time and time again they are ready to step up and help fund the conservation efforts necessary to protect critical habitat on both private and public lands and help promote waterfowl hunting to the next generation of North Dakota residents.

Additionally, this legislation would enable Game and Fish to more effectively monitor and analyze the annual number of resident waterfowl hunters, providing valuable insights into hunting activity and harvest rates. Dozens of states across the United States have a state equivalent waterfowl stamp that not only helps fund waterfowl management but allows the state to accurately assess how many waterfowl hunters they have across





the landscape. Game and Fish does a good job of this now through post season survey work and analysis, but having a more accurate number of resident waterfowl hunters will help them achieve their management goals and better serve their constituents.

We look forward to working with members of this committee and the rest of the North Dakota House as this bill moves through the final steps in the legislative process. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly and we ask that you move this bill favorably out of committee.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Cy Baird'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cyrus Hunter Baird  
Senior Director of Government Affairs  
Delta Waterfowl Foundation

Chair Porter and Members of the Committee;

SB 2216 establishes a **North Dakota waterfowl habitat stamp and improvement fund** to support habitat conservation for hunting and youth hunting programs. The bill also improves **data collection** by providing a more accurate count of resident waterfowl hunters, allowing the Game and Fish Department to make more informed management decisions.

This idea originated from working with a grassroots group of duck hunters who wanted more accurate data on resident waterfowl hunting while also supporting the sport.

Recent data from the **2024 spring breeding duck survey** indicates that some waterfowl species have declined nearly **50% since peak years (1994-2016)**, with habitat loss being a contributing factor. SB 2216 also provides additional support for **youth hunting programs**, aligning with the increasing interest in high school trap shooting and hunting.

The **\$5 stamp** is projected to generate **\$400,000 annually**, with all revenue directed toward habitat improvements and hunting programs. I encourage a **yes vote** to enhance conservation efforts, improve data accuracy, and support North Dakota's hunting programs.

Thanks for your consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.

Sean

Sean Cleary

State Senator -- District 35

Bismark, ND

Testimony in support of SB 2216

March 6, 2025

By Paul H. Myerchin

**Representative Porter, Chair of the House Energy & Natural Resources Committee and Members of this Committee:**

I urge this Committee vote in favor of SB 2216 (a waterfowl habitat restoration stamp & youth hunting programs bill) with a **“DO PASS”** recommendation from this Committee **with amendments to improve SB 2216.**

I propose this Committee **restore the price of the stamp for resident waterfowl hunters back to \$10** as was originally proposed when this bill was first introduced.

There is an old adage in the hook and bullet crowd that **“Conservation without capital is just conversation.”** We are in desperate need to make a meaningful impact on waterfowl habitat restoration projects and youth hunting programs within the State. More money charged for this stamp will have that meaningful impact, especially on youth programs.

Additionally, I propose that whatever level this Committee decides to set for resident hunters, **the price for non-resident hunters must be an additional \$10 higher (i.e., resident stamp \$10 v. non-resident stamp \$20).** My testimony in favor of SB 2216 and the recommended amendments is supported below.

I am a lifelong North Dakota resident duck hunter having grown up in Grand Forks and now having lived in Bismarck for nearly the past 30 years. My written testimony here is my own personal views, and I am not speaking for anyone else.

First and foremost, I applaud the sponsors of SB 2216, Senator Cleary and Representatives Bosch and Porter. SB 2216 is the first step in the right direction to address the crises we presently have in North Dakota’s great outdoors: the loss of critical habitat and the recruitment of our youth into North Dakota’s strong tradition of hunting. An excellent summary of this crisis can be found on the ND Game & Fish’s website at [Habitat | North Dakota Game and Fish](#) . Please take special note on how the loss of CRP has caused a dramatic fall in the number of deer hunting license, the pheasant harvest to plummet, and the number of ducks counted each Spring by the Department to drop significantly.

Second, in order to have a meaningful impact, I recommend this Committee **amend SB 2216 to restore the minimum stamp fee for resident waterfowl hunters to \$10 as originally proposed when this bill was introduced.** I have been a proud duck

hunter for the last 37 hunting seasons, and, God willing, am able to enjoy many more. Duck hunters have a long tradition of “taxing ourselves” to support the waterfowl that are so near and dear to our hearts. Our predecessor duck hunters “taxed” themselves during the height of the Great Depression when they asked Congress to pass the federal duck stamp back in 1934. Also, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., was formed by a small group of duck hunters 88 years ago this week back in 1937, again during the Great Depression. I believe today’s duck hunters will again follow that tradition and gladly pay a few extra dollars to make a meaningful impact for habitat projects that benefit waterfowl and increase youth waterfowl hunting.

Additionally, I’m concerned that the \$5 price for the stamp is just “too little too late” for the much larger problem of habitat loss. Back in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was a habitat blessing to North Dakota’s wildlife and our waterfowl flourished because of that habitat. However, we have been steadily losing habitat over the last 15 years and, in fact, **North Dakota now has less CRP acres than Iowa.** We need to turn the tide of habitat loss. One only needs to page through the Cabela’s hunting catalog to realize that there is not much you can buy in the sport of duck hunting for \$10. Heck, a quality box of shotgun shells is anywhere from \$20 to \$30/box. **A \$10 stamp fee is not going to prevent anyone from duck hunting.**

Another positive of this stamp fee is that it will go back to North Dakota’s rural landowners that want to voluntarily participate in habitat projects that benefit waterfowl. **This is a win-win-win piece of legislation.** Landowners win by being compensated for habitat projects on their land. Duck hunters win by having more ducks to chase. And the ducks and geese win by having more quality habitat available.

Third, I recommend that **SB 2216 also be amended to require non-resident duck and goose hunters purchase this stamp at a fee at least \$10 higher than the resident fee.** Throughout the country, no matter what jurisdiction a person hunts or fishes in (i.e., another country, another state, another Indian reservation) the non-resident fees are always higher. It is just the way the “game” is played. Again, an additional \$10 higher fee on a non-resident waterfowl stamp is not going to prevent any hunters from coming to North Dakota to hunt.

Finally, thank you for your consideration of my testimony, and, again, I urge a DO PASS on SB 2216 with the proposed amendments to improve this win-win-win piece of legislation.

Sincerely,  
Paul H. Myerchin  
8725 Spruce Creek Road  
Bismarck, ND 58503

TESTIMONY OF JOHN BRADLEY  
NORTH DAKOTA WILDLIFE FEDERATION  
SENATE BILL 2216  
HOUSE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
MARCH 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 the bill, and we urge a Do Pass on SB 2216. We appreciate the work of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to amend the bill to target waterfowl hunters only and require non-residents to also be included. These changes would increase the funds raised for waterfowl conservation and youth hunting. While we were disappointed to see the Senate Appropriations reduce the license from \$10 to \$5, we feel that the bill is still worthy of passage.

A dedicated waterfowl license for North Dakota waterfowlers would serve several purposes. The dollars generated from the license would be used to provide waterfowl habitat with the state and engage the next generation of waterfowl hunters through desperately needed youth hunting opportunities. The last major benefit would be to provide the North Dakota Game and Fish with a better tool to determine how many resident vs. non-resident waterfowl hunters there are in the state, creating better data and allowing more accurate surveys on resident waterfowl hunter satisfaction.

We realize there is another bill that passed through this committee that is addressing broader license fees. As you know from our testimony, NDWF is supportive of that effort as well.

North Dakota waterfowl hunters have stepped up, met across the state, worked with the Department and legislators, and are now asking for this waterfowl license. We urge a Do Pass on SB 2216.



Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
Testimony on SB 2216

North Dakota Game and Fish Department  
Casey Anderson, Wildlife Division Chief  
January 30, 2025

Chairman Patten and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. My name is Casey Anderson, and I serve as the Wildlife Division Chief for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (Department). I am testifying today in support of SB 2216.

This bill, if the proposed amendment is adopted, would enable the Department to better identify and track resident waterfowl hunters. Currently, we estimate the number of active resident waterfowl hunters (16,459 in 2023) from a much larger pool of small game license holders (74,161 in 2023). A specific waterfowl license will allow the Department to accurately determine hunter activity and harvest, reducing the need for broad harvest surveys while increasing response rates and data accuracy. Furthermore, this legislation would add dollars to the Department to work on increasing habitat for waterfowl as well as increase support for youth hunting programs. For these reasons the Department would ask the committee to adopt the offered amendment and give the amended SB 2216 a do pass recommendation from this committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

# 2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Coteau AB Room, State Capitol

SB 2216

4/3/2025

Relating to waterfowl habitat restoration stamp fees and the waterfowl habitat improvement fund.

9:19 a.m. Chairman Porter called the hearing to order.

Members Present: Chairman Porter, Vice Chairman Anderson, Vice Chair Novak,  
Representatives: Dockter, Hagert, Headland, Heinert, Johnson, Marschall, Olson, Ruby,  
Conmy, Foss

### Discussion Topics:

- Committee Action

9:20 a.m. Representative Dockter moved a Do Pass.

9:20 a.m. Representative Foss seconded the motion.

9:21 a.m. Casey Anderson, Chief, Wildlife Division, ND Game and Fish Department, answered question for the committee.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Todd Porter	Y
Representative Dick Anderson	Y
Representative Anna Novak	Y
Representative Liz Conmy	Y
Representative Jason Dockter	Y
Representative Austin Foss	Y
Representative Jared c. Hagert	Y
Representative Craig Headland	Y
Representative Pat D. Heinert	Y
Representative Jorin Johnson	Y
Representative Andrew Marschall	Y
Representative Jeremy L. Olson	Y
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y

Motion carried: 13-0-0

Bill carrier: Representative Foss

9:26 a.m. Chairman Porter closed the hearing.

*Leah Kuball, Committee Clerk*

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**REENGROSSED SB 2216 ([25.1008.03000](#))**

**Energy and Natural Resources Committee (Rep. Porter, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). Reengrossed SB 2216 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.