

North Dakota Game And Fish News

Eight Bighorn Sheep Licenses
The North Dakota Game and Fish Department allocated eight bighorn sheep licenses for the 2025 hunting season, one more than last year.

One license was issued in unit B1, one in B2, one in B3, three in B4 and one in B5. In addition, one license, as authorized under North Dakota Century Code, was auctioned in March by the Midwest Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation, from which all proceeds are used to enhance bighorn sheep management in North Dakota.

In total, 21,221 applicants applied for bighorn sheep. Successful applicants have been notified.

Prospective hunters were required to apply for a bighorn license earlier this year on the bighorn sheep, moose and elk application.

Remaining Fall Turkey Licenses Available September 17
The wild turkey lottery has been held and more than 1,200 licenses remain in ten units.

Beginning September 17 at 8 a.m. Central time, all remaining licenses will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis. Hunters are allowed a maximum of five licenses for the fall season.

Resident and nonresident hunters must purchase a license online at the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov.

The fall turkey season runs October 11 through January 4, 2026.

Licenses remain for the following units: Unit 04, portions of Billings and Golden Valley counties, (39); Unit 13, Dunn County, (619); Unit 19, Grant and Sioux counties and portions of Morton County, (12); Unit 25, McHenry County and portions of Pierce and Ward counties, (290); Unit 30, Morton County, (83); Unit 31, Mountrail County, (11); Unit 44, Hettinger County and Slope County, (25); Unit 45, Stark County, (51); Unit 47, Eddy, Foster, Kidder, Sheridan, Stutsman and Wells counties, (11); and Unit 51, Burke County, Renville County and a portion of Ward County, (89).

Upland Game Brood Survey
North Dakota's roadside surveys conducted in late July and August indicates pheasant numbers are relatively the same as last year, while

gray partridge and sharp-tailed grouse numbers were down.

Total pheasants observed (91.6 per 100 miles) are down 3 percent from last year and broods (11.4) per 100 miles are down 1 percent. The average brood size (5.1) is down 6 percent. The statewide number of pheasants observed per 100 miles is 48 percent above the ten-year average. The final summary is based on 285 survey runs made along 100 brood routes across North Dakota.

Observers in the northwest counted 14.7 broods and 115 pheasants per 100 miles, down from 20.8 broods and 164 pheasants in 2024. Average brood size was 4.3 chicks.

Results from the southeast showed 9.6 broods and 73 pheasants per 100 miles, up from 7.9 broods and 57 pheasants in 2024. Average brood size was 4.7 chicks.

Statistics from southwestern North Dakota indicated 14.8 broods and 125 pheasants per 100 miles, up from 13.8 broods and 119 pheasants in 2024. Average brood size was 5.8 chicks.

The northeast district, generally containing secondary pheasant habitat with lower pheasant numbers compared to the rest of the state, showed 4.9 broods and 37 pheasants per 100 miles, compared to 4.3 broods and 37 pheasants last year. Average brood size was 4.4 chicks.

Sharptails were down 38 percent statewide (12 sharptails per 100 miles), and 30 percent below the ten-year average. Brood survey results showed 2.1 broods per 100 miles and an average brood size of 4.4.

Partridge observed per 100 miles were down 26 percent (16 partridge per 100 miles). Observers recorded 1.8 broods per 100 miles, and 8.1 chicks per brood.

The grouse and partridge seasons open September 13 and continue through January 4, 2026.

The pheasant season opens October 11 and continues through January 4, 2026. The two-day youth pheasant hunting weekend, when legally licensed residents and non-residents 15 and younger can hunt statewide, is set for October 4-5.

Submit Wing Envelopes
Hunters can help in the effort to

manage upland game birds in North Dakota by collecting feathers from harvested birds and sending in wing envelopes.

Birds included in the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's upland game wing survey, which has been in practice for decades, are ring-necked pheasants, sharp-tailed grouse, Hungarian partridge, turkeys and ruffed grouse.

Collecting enough pheasant samples is typically never a problem, but securing enough sharptail and partridge feathers can be.

Game and Fish biologists will take as many sharptail and partridge feathers as they can get because the more collected, the better the data. Biologists can determine if birds are male or female, age ratios, survival, nesting success, hatch dates and overall production.

What biologists learn from samples is vital to helping manage North Dakota upland game birds.

Instructions for submitting wing data are printed on the envelope.

Hunters interested in receiving wing envelopes should visit the Game and Fish website, gf.nd.gov.

Dakota Datebook: Annie's House

By Carole Butcher
Anybody alive on September 11 in 2001 probably remembers where they were when the Twin Towers fell. New York City may seem very far away from North Dakota, but North Dakotans were directly affected by the event. A mother lost her daughter; a police officer from North Dakota reported for duty on his day off and spent the next week working at Ground Zero; and many North Dakotans went to war in the aftermath.

Jenette Nelson watched coverage of the attacks from her living room in North Dakota. She knew her daughter, Ann, was on the 104th floor of the north tower. It was painful to watch the coverage and to learn that Ann did not survive.

When her belongings arrived home, they included her laptop computer. Jenette said it was five years before she could bring herself to open the computer, but when she did, she found Ann's bucket list. It included activities such as scuba diving at the Great Barrier Reef and volunteering for charity. But one item particularly caught Jenette's attention, Ann wanted to build a home in North Dakota.

An organization of New York City firefighters, ground zero works, and victims' families called "New York Says Thank You" later heard of the bucket list, and they stepped up to the challenge. In 2012, more than 500 volunteers traveled to North Dakota to build an 11,000 square foot ski lodge in Bottineau Winter Park.

Today, "Annie's House" is a non-profit offering adaptive recreational opportunities for individuals of all ages with disabilities, including veterans. Jenette says the project is a comfort, and an item on Ann's bucket list is crossed off.

Proceedings Of The Board Of County Commissioners

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MOUNTRAIL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
1. OPENING & ROLL CALL
The Board met in regular session on Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. in the Emergency/Community Room, Mountrail County Courthouse, Stanley ND with Commissioners Trudy Ruland, Wayne Olson, Jason Rice, John DeGroot, and Joan Hollekim present. State's Attorney, Wade Enget was present.

Chairman Ruland called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. BUSINESS
A. AGENDA
Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Rice, to review and approve the agenda as corrected. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

B. MINUTES
Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Olson, to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2025 meeting as corrected. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

C. FEES
Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve the July Fees for the Clerk of Court & Sheriff. Upon roll call, DeGroot, Rice, Hollekim, Ruland and Olson voted yes. Motion carried.

D. PAYROLL
Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve the paid time off for the Appointed Officials for the month of July. Upon roll call, Ruland, Hollekim, Rice, Olson and DeGroot voted yes. Motion carried.

E. 2026 BUDGETS
Stephanie A. Pappa, Auditor discussed the 2026 budgets.

F. BILLS
Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve the bills totaling \$2,427,307.32 & July 20 through August 2 payroll, checks #20116-20120 and direct deposits #1-194 totaling \$636,566.27. Upon roll call, DeGroot, Hollekim, Ruland, Rice and Olson voted yes. Motion carried. (A complete list of bills is posted on a regular basis on the Mountrail County website @ www.co.mountrail.nd.us under the County Commissioner heading and/or are available for review in the Auditor's Office during normal business hours).

G. BOARD CONCERNS
State's Attorney Enget gave a brief update on the Kartch eminent domain issue for the CR3 Palermo North Project.

3. APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED 9:15 A.M.
Jessica Niemitalo, Treasurer met with the board to renew a Certificate of Deposit (CD) for \$10 million at Bravera.

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve renewing the Certificate of Deposit (CD) for \$10 million at Bravera for 12 months. Upon roll call, Hollekim, DeGroot, Ruland, Olson and Rice voted yes. Motion carried.

9:20 A.M.
Stephanie A. Pappa, Auditor along with Javayne Olyoe with Upper Missouri District Health Unit (UMDHU) presented the 2026 preliminary Upper Missouri District Health Unit budget.

9:30 A.M.
Kim Savage, Tax Director met with the board to request closing the office for a half day on September 29th, full days on September 30th to October 1st for attending the Vanguard User Group meeting.

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve closing the Tax Director's office for a half day on September 29th, full days on September 30th & October 1st to attend the Vanguard User Group meeting with the Treasurer's office assisting with calls during the closure. The closure was allowed for this year as the training would be beneficial for the newly hired employees, although the office will remain open if the training is made available through live streaming. Upon roll call, all present voted yes. Motion carried.

9:40 A.M.
Laurie Johnson, Correction Administrator met with the board for approval of out of state travel.

Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve the out of state travel for two people to Alexandria or St. Cloud, MN on October 8 & 9th and Laurie Johnson to River Falls, WI on September 24 & 25th. Upon roll call, DeGroot, Ruland, Rice, Olson and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

9:45 A.M.
Jana Hennessy, Road & Bridge (R&B) Engineer along with Scott Duerre, Superintendent met to discuss Road & Bridge.

1. CR4 RECONSTRUCTION & POWER POLE RELOCATION
Engineer Hennessy discussed the on-going conversation for the CR4 Reconstruction and Power Pole Relocation with Mountrail Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC). Wade Enget, State's Attorney discussed North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) 24-01-42 prohibiting construction within 75 feet of the centerline of any county highway right of way without first obtaining consent of the board of county commissioners. Chairman Ruland also discussed that on the Williams County side all poles were outside of the 75' right of way but not in Mountrail County. Kyle Sorenson, MWEC landman stated that in Williams County they had all the right of way acquired. Alex Vournas, General Manager of MWEC discussed working together for a cost-effective solution for both parties. MWEC General Manager Vournas also discussed splitting the cost of the east section of CR4 for the moving of the distribution/transmission lines with an estimate totaling \$2,042,400. Craig Mizera, HDR Engineering discussed the possibility of shifting the road to the North. This will be discussed at the next commissioner meeting. Later in the meeting it was verified that the Paulson Creek Bridge 150' right of way was acquired back in 1980.

2. CR11-PROJECT 11(67)23
Engineer Hennessy along with Craig Mizera and Jon Skjoldal with HDR Engineering discussed Dale Brown's request for changes to driveway. The cost for Option 3 for the MWEC to lower the underground electrical is \$86,000 not to exceed \$132,500. The contractor costs to cut slopes and reconstruct the approach to pre-construction location would be in addition to MWEC's estimate for underground electrical. Dale Brown was in agreement with this option.

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve moving forward with Dale Brown's approach as Option 3 to have MWEC to lower the underground electrical and the contractor cut the slopes and reconstruct the approach to pre-construction location totaling \$86,000 not to exceed \$132,500 plus the cost of the Contractor. Upon roll call, Ruland, Rice,

Olson, DeGroot and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

Moved by Comm. Hollekim, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve the change order #2 for a cultural resource documentation by the State Historical Preservation Office for Project 11(67)23 CR11 reconstruction totaling \$7,700. Upon roll call, Hollekim, Ruland, DeGroot, Rice and Olson voted yes. Motion carried.

3. CR10 EAST – PHASE I & CR 11
Engineer Hennessy discussed moving CR10- East Phase I & CR11 from 2027 to paving in 2026.

Moved by Comm. DeGroot, seconded by Comm. Olson, to approve moving forward with the paving project in the year 2026 for CR10 East Phase I and CR11 consisting of approximately 21.91 miles of CR10/53rd St NW from CR11/67th Ave east approximately 7 miles to Ward County and CR11/67th Ave NW from 53rd St NW north approx. 6 miles to 59th St NW and the Phase II portion of CR10/51st St NW from 74th Ave NW east approx. 7 miles to 67th Ave and 67th Ave NW north approx. 2 miles to CR10/53rd St NW at an estimated cost of \$18,549,757.05 for construction and engineering. Upon roll call, Rice, Hollekim, Olson, DeGroot and Ruland voted yes. Motion carried.

4. CR10 WEST-PHASE II RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT
Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. Rice, to approve the advertising for CR10 West-Phase II Reconstruction Project at an estimated cost \$13,064,345.15 for construction and engineering and include along with paving of CR10 and CR11 as discussed above. Upon roll call, Ruland, Olson, Rice, DeGroot and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

5. CR3 – CHANGE ORDER NO 1
Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. Hollekim, to approve Change order #1 to the contract with Knife River Materials for the Palermo North Reconstruction Project to include an overlay on the CR3 Palermo Spur totaling \$309,662.10. Upon roll call, Olson, DeGroot, Ruland, Hollekim and Rice voted yes. Motion carried.

6. QUOTE FROM KNIFE RIVER
Moved by Comm. Rice, seconded by Comm. DeGroot, to approve emergency pavement repairs on CR9 (City of White Earth) and CR9-101st Ave NW from Knife River totaling \$307,550. Upon roll call, Ruland, Olson, Rice, DeGroot and Hollekim voted yes. Motion carried.

7. CRAFTCO SS250
Moved by Comm. Olson, seconded by Comm. Hollekim, to approve the purchase of a new crack sealing machine (Crafco SS250) from Sourcewell totaling \$80,287.40. Upon roll call, DeGroot, Olson, Hollekim, Ruland and Rice voted yes. Motion carried.

8. 40TH ST NW
Craig Mizera, HDR Engineering updated the board on 40th St NW.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT
No one had any comments.

5. ADJOURN
The Board adjourned at 11:35 A.M. to meet in regular session on Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 9:00 A.M. Accepted and approved this 2nd day of September, 2025. Trudy Ruland, Chairman
Mountrail County Commissioner
Stephanie A. Pappa
Mountrail County Auditor

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