

# North Dakota Outdoors.. A look back at last years deer season and ahead to this years

By Doug Leier/  
North Dakota Game  
and Fish Department

Before you apply for your 2025 North Dakota deer license, with an application deadline of June 4, we should review the 2024 numbers.

First let me remind you these are numbers, statistics. What you can't read in deer "success" are hunters who chose not to squeeze the trigger waiting for a bigger buck or doe. Or archery hunters who on the last day decided to pass on a doe in hopes it may help replenish the herd. They may philosophically think the season satisfactory, but in an abstract world they did not fill their tag. There are many scenarios to explain a simple filled or unfilled tag that doesn't tell the whole story.

**A look back at 2024 deer licenses and season success**  
42,416 North Dakota deer hunters took approximately 23,300 deer during the 2024 deer gun hunting season. Game and Fish made available 50,100 deer gun licenses last year. Overall hunter



Doug Leier

success was 55%, with each hunter spending an average of 4.7 days in the field.

Hunter success for antlered white-tailed deer was 49% and 44% for antlerless whitetails.

Mule deer buck success was 80% and 78% for antlerless mule deer.

Hunters with any antlered or any antlerless licenses generally harvest white-tailed deer, as these licenses are predominantly in units with mostly whitetails. Buck hunters had a success rate of 61%, while doe hunters had a success rate of 56%.

Game and Fish issued 11,920 gratis licenses in 2024, and 9,484 hunters harvested 4,199 deer for a success rate of 44%.

A total of 956 muzzle-loader licenses were issued, and 790 hunters harvested 232 white-tailed deer (116 antlered, 116 antlerless). Hunter success was 29%.

A total of 27,102 archery licenses (23,993 resident, 3,109 nonresident) were issued in 2024. In total, 22,449 bowhunters harvested 5,794 deer (4,884 whitetails, 910 mule deer) for a success rate of 26%.

## The 2025 deer season

For the 2025 North Dakota deer season, 42,300 licenses are available to hunters, down 7,800 from last year.

In addition, muzzle-loader licenses were reduced by 150 and restricted youth antlered mule deer licenses remained the same.

Casey Anderson, North Dakota Game and Fish Department wildlife division chief, said data indicated the state's deer population is stable to decreasing throughout the state.

"The state's deer population continues to recover from the 2021 EHD outbreak and the



NDGF

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severe winter of 2022-23, which limited population growth despite reduced gun licenses during 2023 and 2024 hunting seasons," Anderson said. "Modest license allocations are intended to maintain hunting opportunities while encouraging population growth in the state."

High-quality deer habitat is not abundant, which has limited the potential for population recovery. If CRP contracts continue to expire, Anderson said 85% of the once 3.4 million acres present in 2007 will be lost by 2026.

The spring mule deer survey showed western

North Dakota's population is 14% lower than last year despite a reduced harvest and consecutive mild winters.

Those who didn't apply last year will lose accrued points by not applying or purchasing a point this year.

State law allows residents age 11, 12 and 13 to obtain any antlerless licenses, except in units 3B1, 3B2 and 4A through 4F where mule deer doe licenses are restricted.

Total deer licenses are determined by harvest rates, aerial surveys, depredation reports, hunter observations,

input at advisory board meetings, and comments from the public, landowners and department field staff.

North Dakota's 2025 deer gun season opens Nov. 7 at noon and continues through Nov. 23.

Applicants for regular deer gun, gratis, youth and muzzleloader can apply online through the Game and Fish Department's website at [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov). Again, the deadline for applying is midnight June 4.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS  
PROJECT: Barnes County  
Courthouse Renovation  
OWNER: Barnes County  
Located in Valley City,  
North Dakota**

**TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS:**  
Sealed proposals for the work associated with the Barnes County Courthouse Renovation will be mailed or delivered to Barnes County, 230 4th St NW Valley City, ND 58072 until 10:00 AM, Central Time on Tuesday, June 3, 2025. At this time bids will be opened and publicly read during the county commission meeting.

A. Individual Prime Contractor Bids will be accepted for the following work scopes: General construction work, mechanical work (including HVAC and plumbing) and electrical work. B. Bids shall be in accordance with, and submitted on the supplied bid form, from bidding documents prepared by HTG Architects, 840 43rd Ave NE, Suite 200, Bismarck, ND 58503. Failure to use supplied bid forms will result in rejection of the Bid. C. Complete digital project bidding documents are available for viewing and download

i. [www.htg-architects.com](http://www.htg-architects.com) "Projects for Bid" at the bottom of the web page. Enter Quest CDN Number 9683124 for the Project Number. ii. [www.questcdn.com](http://www.questcdn.com). you may download the digital plan documents for a fee of \$30 by inserting the QuestCDN project 9683124 on the website's Project Search page. Please contact QuestCDN at (952) 233-1632 or [info@questcdn.com](mailto:info@questcdn.com) for assistance in free membership registration, downloading, and working with this digital project information. D. Bidders are encouraged to perform a site visit. A Prebid walk through will be scheduled by addendum.

Please contact Matt Krueger at Martin Mechanical at (701) 293-7957 or [mkrueger@martinmech.com](mailto:mkrueger@martinmech.com).

E. Each bidder shall fully inform themselves prior to bidding as to existing conditions and limitations under which the work is to be performed, and include in the bid a sum to cover the cost of items necessary to perform the work as set forth in the contract documents. No allowance will be made to any bidder due to any lack of such examination or knowledge. The submission of a bid will be considered as conclusive evidence that the bidder(s) has made such examination.

F. Each bid submitted shall consist of two separate sealed envelopes, attached together, with one clearly marked "Bid Proposal" and the other clearly marked "Bid Bond" on the outside of the envelopes. In addition, the Bid Proposal envelope shall be marked with the bidder's name and address, the project title; "Barnes County Courthouse Renovation" and the bid due date; Tuesday, June 3, 2025 at 10:00 AM Central Time. On the envelope containing the Bid Proposal form, bidder shall also acknowledge receipt of all Addenda. G. In the envelope marked Bid Bond, a Bidder's Security Bond in a sum equal to five percent (5%) of the full amount of the proposed bid to Barnes County, executed by a surety company authorized to do business in North Dakota; the bond shall be for the highest amount of the bidder's total bid combination. All bonds shall comply with North Dakota Century Code, including Chapter 48-01 as amended.

H. Each bidder shall hold a current and valid North Dakota Contractor's License of the proper class issued by the Secretary of State and shall enclose a copy of the license or certificate of renewal of the license in the same envelope as the Bidder's Security Bond.

I. In the envelope marked Bid Proposal each bidder shall submit two (2) copies of the Bid Form supplied with the bidding documents or through addenda. On the envelope containing the Bid Proposal Form, the bidder shall acknowledge receipt of all Addenda. Refer to the Instructions to Bidders for specific bid submittal instructions. Bids submitted that do not follow the bidding requirements will be returned unopened.

J. All bids must be upon the basis of cash payment for the work and materials and must be sealed. All construction items covered in the contract must be completed by the defined schedule.

K. No base bids or alternate bids may be withdrawn for a period of sixty (60) days after the date and time set for the opening of bids.

L. The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids at their discretion, and to waive any informalities therein. M. The successful bidder is required at the time the Contract is executed to provide a Sales Tax Certificate, Workers' Compensation Certificate, Certificate of Insurance to include North Dakota Stop Gap and Builders Risk coverage, Additional Insured Statement, Performance Bond, and Payment Bond.

N. The successful bidder, upon failure or refusal to execute and deliver the Contract and bonds required within ten (10) business days of after notice of acceptance of bid, shall forfeit to the Owner, as liquidated damages for such failure or refusal, the security deposit included with the bid. O. The project shall commence construction as soon as possible after the notice of award and be completed by date determined between contractor and owner.

Barnes County Representative  
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(May 9, 16 & 23, 2025)

# SWAP Comment Period

From the North Dakota game and Fish

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department encourages public comment on the revision of its 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan.

The SWAP is North Dakota's guiding document for the conservation and restoration of at-risk species and their habitats, with a focus on preventing species from becoming endangered. It identifies species of greatest conservation need, including fish, wildlife and invertebrates.

The plan is revised every 10 years and represents a unified effort involving various stakeholders aimed at creating and implementing conservation strategies to ensure the long-term protection and sustainability of the state's fish and wildlife.

North Dakota's SWAP is a collaborative effort by Game and Fish staff, species experts, partner conservation groups, and state, federal and local agencies.

A draft of the plan is available on the Department's website, [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov), and public comments are accepted through June 30, 2025.

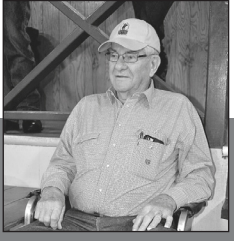


## Dakota Attitude

**Larry Christiansen**

Interview: November 8, 2017

County: Cass  
City: West Fargo



**Been Around West Fargo Stockyards Since High School**

Larry Christiansen was born in 1940, grew up in West Fargo, and has been around the West Fargo Stockyards since high school. He now owns Christiansen Cattle Company, a cattle-buying operation.

"We do order buying for people, mainly feeder cattle, and they go all over Nebraska and Kansas. We send a lot of cattle into Iowa, southern Minnesota. I buy the critters, I send them down, send the guy a bill, and he sends me back a check.

"People have to trust you and trust that you're gonna do the right thing for 'em. Everybody's cattle, no matter what they look like or what breed they are—they can be some of the ugliest things in the world and some of the most beautiful things in the world, but they're the best cattle. They're the best thing he's got, so he's proud of 'em. There's hardly anybody that I have ever known that didn't think his animal was the best. I've had people come to me and say,

"Well, I talked to so-and-so, and he advised me if you're gonna do something you go to Larry and see him." And that makes you feel good when you send a guy some cattle and they perform well and they do good for him.

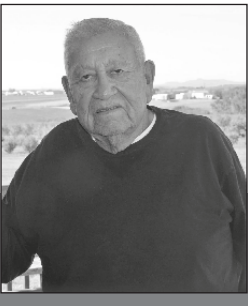
"I had a guy call last week [from] down in Iowa. I'd [sent] him two or three or four loads last winter. This guy's probably not quite as old as I am, but pretty close, and he's got his kids involved, and he said, 'Larry, I've never had cattle that gained like them cattle gained. They gained four and a half pounds a day.' That made me feel pretty, pretty damn good."

Larry Christiansen is 77 but is pretty sure when he will retire. "Well," he says, "I bought a truck and a brand-new Ford pickup diesel in 2000. I'd been tradin' about every four or five years. Well, I got the truck out here and it's 17 years old now and I got 395,000 on it and I was

**Millard  
"Bill" Hale, Sr.**

Interview: September 6, 2017

County: McKenzie  
City: Mandaree



**"You Gotta Talk English!"**

Founded in 1954, the community of Mandaree was named after three tribes—the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara. It was a home for many Native people until they were displaced by the rising backwaters of the Garrison Dam that formed Lake Sakakawea. Bill Hale is from one of those communities flooded by the dam. "The community was called Independence," he says, "and that's where I grew up. My mother was a real good mother. We didn't have the best food, but we ate good. There was a lot of oatmeal, cornflakes, and milk. There was other stuff, like eggs, and we had hogs. Dad made bacon, and oh, it tasted good! I was born and raised Catholic, and my dad went to a Congregational church. I learned it doesn't matter what church you go to. They all believe in the same guy up there."

School was challenging at times for Bill. "The teachers were kind of mean.

The language I speak is Hidatsa, and they'd say, 'You can't talk your own language! You gotta talk English!' One time the teacher jumped right up, come over, grabbed my hand, and...wham! She hit my fingers with a ruler! The metal edge of the ruler cut my finger, and it sure bled. I still have the scar on my finger. I almost hit her. I damn near hit her. I don't know what I did or said. Oh, man did it hurt! The next day I went back, and she was just good to me. I only went through a sixth-grade education. Everything I learned to do is because my eyes and my hands taught me. I didn't quit working until I was 77."

Bill's wife passed away in 2003. They had seven children "I was with her for 50-some years. But I keep going; lonely, tough. All I got is a dog out here. Yeah, it's my partner, but I got my kids and my family. Sometimes I wish my wife was here to sit outside with me and talk. I'm in good health, but you never know. Man up there pulls a string...I'm gone,

**Paul and Audrey  
(Thompson) Geringer**

Interview: August 18, 2015

County: Kidder  
City: Lake Williams



**Too Many  
in a Parade**

"I was raised right here in Lake Williams," Paul Geringer begins. "[Dad] done mechanical work and blacksmith work. He was in demand, and then he had a lot of business, but he didn't charge much money, so he didn't make a big deal about it. He was a top-notch welder. He did a lot of overhauls, replaced motors on vehicles, and pounded out plow lathes, which most people didn't do. He sharpened a lot of plow lathes for the people.

"I spent most of my younger life in [his shop]. All my buddies were playing baseball and having a good time and going to dances, and I ended up in the shop having to help him with his work so he could make ends meet. When I was growing up, it was less than I wanted, but once I got out on my own and got looking back, I thought, 'You know, it probably wasn't such a bad deal after all, because that's how I got my jobs and succeeded in them.' Without the knowledge that I got from being in the shop with my dad I don't think I'd have got as far as I did in mechanics." So after many years in the city, Paul got tired of "the hustle and bustle of the different places I've been to" and decided to return to his hometown. "I found out this house in Lake Williams was for sale and talked to Audrey about it, and she says, 'God, I'd love to live back in a small town again.' So I retired out there and came back here."

Paul says, "I have a boat. Snowmobiles, four-wheelers, motorcycles—just about any toy you want to play with," but he still finds time to drive a senior citizens bus. Audrey, a nurse, does rural outpatient visits for a hospital. As mayor for some years, Paul says he isn't sure how old Lake Williams was, but supposed it to be about 100 years old. Will there be a celebration? "We were gonna have a parade go through town, but there was only three of us here, so it kind of tough as two of them wanted to watch."

*(Editor's Note: The following profiles of North Dakota residents were collected by author James Puppe between 2004-2018, covering 617 subjects and 113,000 miles. He has given permission for his book to be serialized in North*