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## President's Message

Spring is an exciting time of the year. I hear fishing has been pretty good, just not for me, birds are singing and building nests, green has returned to the prairies and a new field season is upon us. Many of you are enjoying working in the outdoors and are looking forward to a productive 2014. Early this year a piece of legislation we have all been watching and trying to influence for four years now finally passed. The Farm Bill was signed by the President on February 7. With the passage of this bill came many exciting new policies and programs SD TWS has supported that will benefit wildlife in South Dakota.

One policy was the re-linking of conservation compliance to eligibility for federal crop insurance premiums. This requires farmers to refrain from farming highly erodible land without a conservation plan or draining wetlands if they want to have part of the crop insurance premium (Usually over 65%) paid for by Uncle Sam. A couple of years ago this re-linkage was thought to be an impossible task. This was critical for the future of South Dakota's wetland dependent wildlife.

Another victory for wildlife conservation in South Dakota was the enactment of the Sod-saver provision. Sod-saver reduces the federal premium subsidy by 50 percentage points on any ground that is converted from grassland with no cropping history (native sod) to a tillable crop for the first four years. It also ends that ability of farmers to transfer yields from other more highly productive farmland to the newly broken ground. Native grassland conversion to cropland has been occurring at record pace over the past five years and this new disincentive couldn't happen soon enough for South Dakota's grassland dependent wildlife.

Congress also did a little bit of consolidation and shrinking of some of the Farm Bill conservation programs, but the positive side is that we still have all the conservation programs. USDA has already held signups for some exciting new initiatives as well as the newly named Ag Conservation Easement Program (WRP/GRP of the past). By the time this newsletter reaches you it is hoped that continuous CRP sign-up will have started as well.



A new program called the Regional Conservation Partnership Program will present new opportunities for creative minds to partner with USDA using their existing programs and some partner match to make the funding from the federal Farm Bill go further. This program may have huge potential to benefit wildlife in South Dakota.

Great work to all of you who helped support the passage of these historical federal policies and programs in the 2014 Farm Bill!

Mark Norton – President  
SD Chapter of The Wildlife Society

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## MEMBERSHIP

Know anyone who is a wildlife professional, who is in a field related to wildlife conservation, or anyone with an interest in South Dakota wildlife? Have you noticed co-workers or someone you know that has been missing at annual meetings?

Membership is \$10/year for a regular membership and \$6/year for students. You can renew a membership by using the membership form included at the end of this newsletter.

Please make your payment to SDTWS.

**Life Members:** The full list of members is available on the website.



## SDTWS can now be found on Facebook!

SDTWS is now on Facebook! Facebook is a social networking website and it is free! If you are currently not signed up for Facebook, you can use the following link and it will direct you to a page to sign up. If you are already a member, the link below will take you the SDTWS Facebook page, where you can join the group!

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/group.php?gid=375605397459>

Facebook is a great way to share information. Facebook can be used to post events, such as the upcoming Outdoor Expo, and to stimulate discussions on environmental issues or other topics of interest. The SDTWS Facebook page is also another way that we can reach out to recruit more individuals in the wildlife conservation field in South Dakota. We are very excited about this new tool and we hope as members that you will benefit from it too!

## SD Grassland Coalition New Listserve

SDSU Extension has recently created an email 'list serve' to better distribute information related to grassland management in South Dakota and the region. This service will allow for improved information sharing for seminars, trainings, speaker events, tours, educational articles, videos, etc. related to grasslands, grazing, and habitat. This information will be distributed directly to your email and will include links and attachments that you can easily click on to view the information.

This service WILL NOT replace the general communications you receive from TWS regarding members-only materials such as newsletters. Rather, it will be an opportunity for you to receive information from a larger group of organizations offering information on grasslands and education (SDSU, SDGC, SRM, NRCS, USFWS, TWS, and others).

Although the Board of the SD TWS see the value in this service, they feel the decision to have emails placed on the list serve should be up to individual members. **If you want to have your email added to the listserv, email Pete Bauman with SDSU directly and request to be added.**  
[peter.bauman@sdstate.edu](mailto:peter.bauman@sdstate.edu)

Here is an example of what you'd receive in your inbox: Messages should be short and to the point.

From: sdgrassinfo

To: you

Subject: David Pratt workshop

Message: The SDGC will be hosting David Pratt seminar "The Other Side of Disaster" on Jan 15-16. Click here for more info.

[http://www.sdgrass.org/uploads/1/8/6/5/18654664/the\\_other\\_side\\_of\\_disaster\\_flyer\\_12.15.13.pdf](http://www.sdgrass.org/uploads/1/8/6/5/18654664/the_other_side_of_disaster_flyer_12.15.13.pdf)

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## CMPS Summer Newsletter

An email with the current issue of Central Mountains and Plains Section newsletter was sent to the 2013 membership. If you didn't get the email and want to read the newsletter, you can find it on the SDTWS website and/or on the National TWS website.

CMPS elections are upon us and we have a great slate of candidates to choose from along with a bylaws revision. Please go to the website to vote now. We will end the voting on August 1.

<http://wildlife.org/CMP/>

# **Comment Paper to US Forest Service regarding Elk Mountain Reforestation**

We have had great support from other conservation organizations such as SCI-GDC, BH Sportsman's Club, Custer County Commission, and the SD Bighorn Sheep Working Group, all in opposition to this proposal.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**USDA Forest Service**

**Black Hills National Forest**

**Elk Mountain Reforestation Project**

**Hell Canyon Ranger District**

**Custer, South Dakota and Weston County, Wyoming**

## **Purpose Of and Need for the Project USFS Proposal**

The purpose of this project is to provide ponderosa pine regeneration on the portion of Elk Mountain that burned in 2001. This action is needed because high fire intensities left vast areas deforested, with no available natural seed source for regeneration. Forest Service Manual (FSM 2472.02) direction states that there is an objective to "maintain all forest lands within the National Forest System in appropriate forest cover" and to "achieve desired time and stocking level goals in a cost-effective manner." Each Regional Forester has the responsibility under FSM 2472.04a (4) to "ensure each area deforested by natural causes; fire, or harvest can be accounted (tracked as "not stocked") for until it is certified" as stocked with enough regeneration to provide a future forested stand of trees. The Black Hills National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan, as amended (Forest Plan), Standard 2416, Phase II Amendment, Chapter II-27, states that "the minimum (stocking) level considered adequate for restocking is 150 seedlings per acre for conifers (ponderosa pine). This represents what is required, considering natural mortality, to produce a merchantable timber stand at rotation age without intermediate treatments."

The area proposed for reforestation is approximately 2,056 acres and is within Management Area (MA) 5.1. The Forest Plan has designated MA 5.1 as Resource Production Emphasis. This area is to be managed as forested ecosystems through a full range of management options to meet a variety of ecological and human needs. Areas in MA 5.1 are to be managed for wood products, water yield, and forage production, while providing a diversity of wildlife and visual quality.

**TWS comments describing our objections to this action are available on the SDTWS website and are not supporting this action because of bighorn sheep utilizing this area as annual range both in SD and Wyoming.**

Submitted by Dennie Mann

## Committee Reports

If a committee isn't listed here, it means there was no activity to report for this newsletter.

No committee reports were received for this newsletter.

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## Newsletter Submissions and Schedule

If you have an announcement, information item, or committee activity report that should be included in the next edition of *A Prairie Voice*, or if your email or mailing address has changed, send the information to: Charlene "Charlie" Bessken at ladyhawk155@hotmail.com or call 605-222-9445. Thanks.

The newsletter is published four times a year in February, June, September and December.

**Special Note: If you change your mailing or email address please let Charlie know. Thanks.**

## South Dakota Chapter TWS - Executive Board

### **President**

Mark Norton  
SD Game, Fish & Parks  
523 East Capitol  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605) 773-3096

### **Past-President**

Silka Kempema  
SD Game, Fish & Parks  
523 East Capitol  
Huron, SD 57350  
(605) 773-2742

### **President-Elect**

John Kanta  
SD Game, Fish & Parks  
4130 Adventure Trail  
Rapid City, SD 57702  
(605) 394-2391

### **Secretary-Treasurer**

Troy Grovenburg  
SDSU, Dept Natural Resource Mgmt  
Box 2140 B, NPS 143  
Brookings, SD 57007-1696  
(605) 688-5064

### **Board Member**

Lee Erickson  
NRCS Sturgis Field Office  
2202 West Main  
Sturgis, SD 57785  
(605) 347-4952 ext 3

### **Board Member**

Casey Heimerl  
SD Game, Fish & Parks  
523 East Capitol  
Pierre, SD 57501  
(605) 773-4345

**Northern Great Plains Working Group Representative:** Rocco Murano, 353-7185

## South Dakota Chapter TWS - Standing Committee Chairs\*

**Audit** – Silka Kempema, 773-2742

**Awards** - Nora Kohlenberg, 222-9408, Nathan Baker 223-7709

**Conservation Review** - Paul Coughlin, 773-4194

**Education & Information** - Laura Hubers, 947-4521

**Membership** – Nora Kohlenberg, 222-9408

**Program** – John Kanta, 394-2391

**Nominations and Elections** – John Kanta, 394-2391

**Resolutions & Public Statements** - Vacant

## South Dakota Chapter TWS - Special Committee Chairs\*

**Arrangements** – Silka Kempema, 773-2742 & Tom Kirschenmann, 352-1874

**Certification** - Vacant

**Chapter History** - Corey Huxoll, 773-4195

**Energy** - K C Jensen, 688-4781 & Silka Kempema, 773-2742

**Fee Hunting & Ownership of Wildlife** - Andy Lindbloom, 223-7709

**Fund Raising** – Casey Heimerl, 773-4345

**Grassland Issues** - Lee Erickson, 347-4952

**Missouri River Issues** – Nathan Baker, 223-7709

**Newsletter/Website** - Charlene “Charlie” Bessken, 222-9445

**Public Lands** -, Dennis Mann, 939-8156, Eddie Childers, 433-5263

**Tribal Fish & Wildlife** - Diane Mann-Klager, 226-7621

**Wetlands** - Ben Bigalke 352-1203

**Wildlife Diseases** - Steve Griffin, 394-6786

**Wildlife Diversity** - Eileen Down Stukel, 773-4229, Silka Kempema, 773-2742

**Workshop** – Travis Runia, 353-8477 & Casey Heimerl, 773-4345

\*Please see the Committees webpage to find the list of Committee members and email contact information.

**SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY**  
Application for Membership Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (indicate home or work) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address (for newsletter delivery) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Note:**

SDTWS's newsletter, *A Prairie Voice*, is all-electronic. Therefore, an e-mail address must be provided above in order to receive it (paper copies will be provided only to individuals who do not have a computer, internet access, or an email address).

Please Check One:    \_\_\_\_\_ New Member\*    \_\_\_\_\_ 2014 Dues Renewal

\* If you did not pay your dues in 2013, you will be considered a new member as per the SDTWS Bylaws.

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Send the completed application/renewal form and a check for \$10.00 (regular), \$6.00 (student) to:

Troy Grovenburg  
South Dakota State University  
Dept Natural Resource Management  
Box 2140 B, NPS 143  
Brookings, SD 57007-1696  
(605) 688-5064

Regular Dues: \$10.00

Student Dues: \$6.00

Life Membership dues are prorated by age as follows:

Age 20 to 35: 25 x annual dues (\$10 x 25 = \$250)

Age 36 to 45: 20 x annual dues (\$10 x 20 = \$200)

Age 46 to 65: 17.5 x annual dues (\$10 x 17.5 = \$175)

Age 66 to 75: 12.5 x annual dues (\$10 x 12.5 = \$125)

Age 76 and over: Free

For more information on becoming a life member, contact Nora Kohlenberg (605) 222-9408.

