



THE
WILDLIFE
SOCIETY

SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER

South Dakota Chapter **The Wildlife Society**

A Prairie Voice



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President's Message

As another busy field season begins to wind down, I'd like to thank each of you for the work you do on behalf of wildlife conservation in South Dakota. Whether you've been conducting research, managing wildlife populations, mentoring students, restoring habitat, or working with private landowners and partners, your efforts make a difference for wildlife and the people who value it.

One of the greatest strengths of the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society is our membership. Our Chapter brings together students and professionals from state, federal, Tribal, academic, nonprofit, and private organizations, each bringing unique perspectives and expertise to wildlife conservation. While we may work for different agencies and institutions, we all share a common goal: conserving South Dakota's wildlife and the landscapes that sustain it.

That spirit of collaboration inspired the theme for our 2027 Annual Meeting:

Shared Landscapes, Shared Opportunities: Wildlife Conservation Across South Dakota

Conserving wildlife depends on strong partnerships. Whether we're conducting research, managing habitat, responding to wildlife disease, or working with landowners and communities, conservation is most successful when we learn from one another and work together. I hope this year's meeting will provide opportunities to share ideas, celebrate accomplishments, strengthen partnerships, and inspire the next generation of wildlife professionals.

I'd also like to recognize two outstanding members of our Chapter. Congratulations to Silka Kempema on being named a 2026 Fellow of The Wildlife Society, one of the Society's highest professional honors. Silka's decades of leadership, mentorship, and service have left a lasting mark on wildlife conservation throughout South Dakota and across our profession.



Congratulations as well to Dennie Mann on his election as President-Elect of The Wildlife Society's Central Mountains and Plains Section. Dennie has been an outstanding leader within our Chapter for many years, and we are excited to see him represent South Dakota at the Section level.

Finally, I hope you'll make plans now to join us for the 2027 South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society Annual Meeting, which will be held March 1–3, 2027, at South Dakota State University in Brookings. Whether you're a long-time member, a student attending your first conference, or a new wildlife professional, we look forward to welcoming you. Our annual meeting remains the highlight of the Chapter year—an opportunity to reconnect with colleagues, learn about exciting conservation work occurring across our state, support our students, and strengthen the partnerships that make our Chapter successful.

Thank you for your continued support of the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society and for everything you do to advance wildlife conservation. I wish you a safe conclusion to the field season, and I look forward to seeing many of you in Brookings next March.

William “Bill” Severud



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SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER

SAVE THE DATE!



Photo credit: Dennie Mann

Shared Landscapes, *Shared Opportunities*

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ACROSS SOUTH DAKOTA

Wildlife and their habitats cross boundaries—
and so do the partnerships needed to conserve them.
Join professionals, students, and partners from
across the state as we learn, collaborate,
and shape the future together.



**MARCH
1–3,
2027**



**SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE UNIVERSITY**
BROOKINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA



Meet your SDTWS Executive Board!

Kirsten Engeseth, Board Member



As a new resident of South Dakota as of 2025, I am thrilled to serve as a board member for the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society. I moved to South Dakota following a career in wildlife conservation and education

that has taken me all around the United States and multiple countries.

As an instructor in the Department of Natural Resource Management at South Dakota State University, my work is built on the philosophy that wildlife and people are intrinsically linked through our environment, and that all people share a vested interest in the conservation of these precious resources. Supporting students who will be future stewards, researchers, and thoughtful leaders and community members in the field of wildlife is my life's work.

While I have broad and varied experience across all realms of wildlife, herpetology is my calling and you will often find me advocating for these oft underrepresented but no less important classes of wildlife, both in the classroom and in the field.

I look forward to supporting the mission of The Wildlife Society in my role as a board member and encouraging the next generation to grow our impact on South Dakota's communities.

Kirsten Engeseth

Instructor of Natural Resource Management
South Dakota State University



Ashley Fazekas

SDSU Graduate Student Project Update

Evaluating conservation agriculture practices as a strategy to support wildlife in SD croplands

I am currently working on a master's degree at SDSU studying wildlife. My project involves evaluating conservation agriculture practices as a strategy to support wildlife in South Dakota croplands. I am currently collecting data on species richness and relative abundance for small mammals, large mammals, birds, and bats across several types of agricultural fields. Our main agriculture practice that we are interested in understanding wildlife responses to is no tillage stacked rotation. This type of practice involves more primary crop variation over a 5-year period along with planting assorted cover crops, leaving residue on the ground, and grazing cattle. I am excited to see if this conservation agriculture practice not only supports healthier crops but also promotes greater wildlife diversity.



Picture of a sherman trap and my processing kit in a corn field



An acoustic bat detector in a CRP grassland field that is a part of my study



a northern
grasshopper mouse
in a corn field

Ashley Fazekas SDSU Grad Student Photos



me scruffing a deer
mouse in a soybean

3 photos from my trail cameras that I use for large mammal detection. One picture is a coyote in a corn field, a short-tailed weasel in a soybean field, and a striped skunk in a corn field.



Victor A. Piñeiro
PhD Graduate Student

*Prescribed fire and how it influences mammal communities
across the mixed grass prairies along the Missouri River*

As a PhD student in the Cheeseman lab at SDSU, I study how prescribed fire influences mammal communities across the mixed grass prairies along the Missouri River in South Dakota. Working on Game Production Areas managed by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, I am investigating how mammals and vegetation respond to prescribed burns before and after fire by examining changes in species diversity, habitat use, and resource availability. Using a combination of live trapping, camera trapping, vegetation surveys, and stable isotope analysis, my research allows me the opportunity to explore how fire reshapes habitats and how different grassland species adapt throughout the recovery process. Grassland fires stimulate the regeneration of native prairie vegetation, producing rich forage that may attract many different mammal species. The goal is to understand the role of fire while providing wildlife managers with recommendations for using prescribed fire to restore native grasslands, conserve biodiversity, and promote healthy ecosystems throughout the Northern Great Plains.



Victor A. Piñeiro
PhD Graduate Student

*Prescribed fire and how it influence mammal communities
across the mixed grass prairies along the Missouri River*



Photos from Dennie & Mary Ann Mann

Mary Ann and I spent the middle of May in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks photographing wildlife.

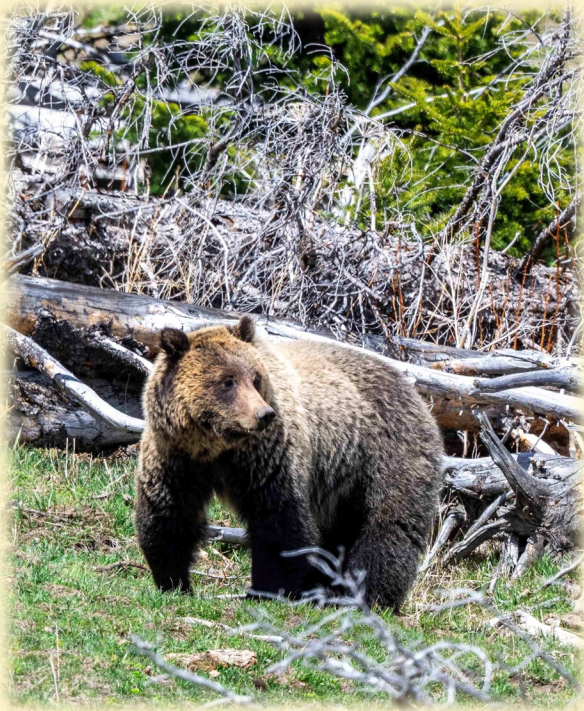
We captured a wolf kill on the Gros Ventre River system. At the end of 2024, a minimum of 46 wolves in 6 packs resided in the Jackson Hole area with home ranges in Grand Teton National



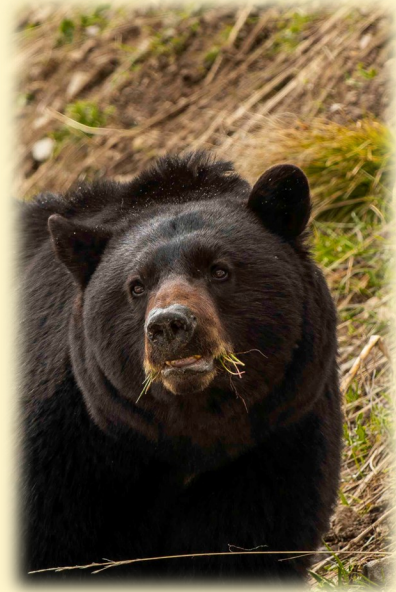
Park. The Jedediah (4 wolves), Lower Gros Ventre (12), Two Ocean (9), Horsetail Creek (9), Spread Creek (7) and Blacktail Butte (5) packs all had home ranges that included the park. The Two Ocean pack dened and had its rendezvous site in the park in 2024, and the Lower Gros Ventre pack rendezvoused in the park. The Pacific Creek pack (13 wolves) maintained a territory outside the east boundary of the park. Attached is the image of the elk kill with ravens, golden eagle, and wolf.



In Yellowstone we were able to photograph 1 grizzly near Soda Butte Creek moving through the sage brush. Another Grizzly near Yellowstone Lake, in all we located 10 grizzlies during the 12 days, and 7 black bears



In the Lamar Valley we found a brown-black bear in the Lamar Valley near the river hunting and grazing along the river. Mary Ann also found a yearling black bear near Tower Falls with no female around, spent over an hour with the cub.



Some additional images in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. It was a great two weeks hunting with camera gear and visiting with other wildlife photographers. Both parks were very crowded, dry conditions through out the area.



Save the Date-TWS Annual Conference

November 1-5

Des Moines, Iowa

Click [Here](#) for more information



2026 Annual Conference

[ABOUT THE CONFERENCE](#)

[CONFERENCE POLICIES](#)

[ABOUT IOWA](#)

[EVENT DETAILS](#)

[SPONSORS + EXHIBITORS](#)

[REGISTRATION](#)

You're Invited to TWS' Annual Conference

The Wildlife Society's Annual Conference is one of the largest gatherings of wildlife professionals and supporters in North America. Over the past three decades, TWS has hosted the conference in 27 different cities across 23 states and two provinces. Des Moines, Iowa will mark the 28th city visited by TWS in 33 years. We hope you join us, as TWS once again prepares for a memorable event filled with engaging speakers, immersive workshops and numerous networking opportunities.

Join us on November 1-5 to experience the latest advancements in wildlife management while getting opportunities for networking and career advancement.

Photos from Mike Gutzmer Tribal Fish & Wildlife

Piping plovers observed just above Tailrace 6/25/26 with least tern and piping plover monitoring for Loup Power District.



Least tern chicks just above the Tailrace on the Platte River, NE.



South Dakota Grasslands Initiative

The South Dakota Grassland Initiative is a collaborative network of diverse organizations, agencies, and individuals who support grasslands as a means of retaining prairie ecosystems, both native and restored, while sustaining rural economies and healthy communities.

South Dakota Grassland Initiative welcomes partners from all facets of South Dakota, including those with a focus on our agricultural, environmental, economic, and social components.

Through coordinated efforts focused on our grasslands, we are able to amplify our impact to support both the ecological communities and rural communities that depend on an ecosystem that once made up 95% of our state.

Check out the [2026 July Newsletter](#)



Central Grasslands Roadmap

GUIDING CONSERVATION - The Central Grasslands Roadmap Initiative provides biome-level guidance to increase the capacity for conservation of North America's Central Grasslands, spanning 700 million acres across Indigenous Lands, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.

By bringing together diverse nations and seven sectors, the Roadmap identifies a shared vision, common principles, and collaborative priorities for the people and organizations living and working on the Grasslands.

ELEVATING GRASSLANDS - As one of North America's largest and most vital ecosystems, the Central Grasslands provide critical support for agriculture, food security, rural communities and the economy, through key environmental functions including water supply, soil health, climate resiliency, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration.

The Grasslands need our attention and stewardship. Click [here](#) for more info.



Central Grasslands Roadmap

GUIDING US TOWARD RESILIENT & SUSTAINABLE
GRASSLANDS & HUMAN COMMUNITIES

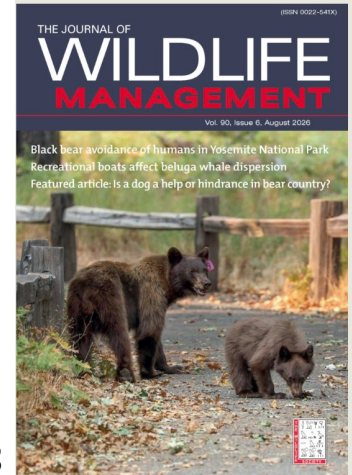
The South Dakota Grasslands Initiative supports the Central Grasslands Roadmap and provides strategy and support for efforts related to supporting the roadmap's efforts in South Dakota.

[MORE INFO](#)

The Wildlife Society News

Popular Articles on the TWS website

- [Even songbirds sweat the small stuff](#)
- [Extreme weather events alter chicks' growth](#)
- [Deer marks glow in the dark](#)



TWS New Logo



For the latest TWS News

<https://wildlife.org/news/>

Check it out...

- Renew your membership [online](#) at SDTWS website
- SDTWS is on Facebook!

South Dakota Chapter



[Chapter Home](#) [About](#) [Membership](#) [Annual Meeting](#) [News](#) [Contact](#)

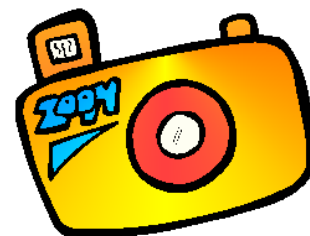
Click [here](#) to join the group! Facebook is a great way to share information, post events, to stimulate discussions on environmental issues or other topics of interest.

Contact Chuck Pyle at goosemansd@hotmail.com if you have events, pictures, or topics you would like posted to the site.





PHOTO CONTEST



We know our members have great pictures from their outside adventures including landscapes, hunting, outdoor recreation, and flora/fauna. We would like to showcase your pictures during a photo contest at this year's annual meeting.

Entry fee: \$5 per photo—no limit on number of entries

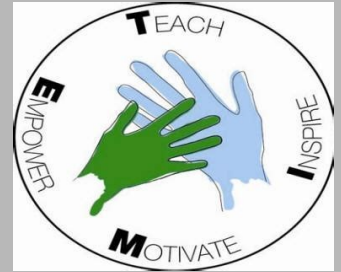
Size: 8x10 attached to 10x12 black cardboard / foam board mat

- Photos can be submitted prior to the meeting to any board member or can be brought to the annual meeting
- Winner will be chosen by popular vote at 2027 Annual Meeting & receive 50% of the entry fees.
- The winning photo will be displayed on the SDTWS website and will be made into a canvas to be auctioned off at 2028 annual meeting.



SDTWS Mentoring Program

I would like to remind everyone of a great opportunity through the SDTWS that is available for both professionals and aspiring professionals alike. The SDTWS Mentoring Program was launched in the fall of 2019 and has had 10 mentors and 10 mentees sign up to be involved.



This program was designed to connect professionals with nonprofessionals as well as professionals with professionals who seek guidance and constructive feedback to aid in the aspects of career direction and opportunities, professional and academic advice, and fostering networking relationships.

The SDTWS board will connect mentees with appropriate mentors. We encourage all that are interested in becoming a mentor or mentee to please email Eric Magedanz at eric.magedanz@state.sd.us.

Notes From the Field...

- SDTWS is looking to highlight projects that students and wildlife professionals are working on.
- If you have a project or story to share—please contact Jennifer Briggs or one of the Executive Board members.
We look forward to sharing your story.

SDTWS Executive Board 2026

President

[Bill Severud](#)

SDSU

Brookings, SD

Secretary/Treasurer

[Julie Lindstrom](#)

SDGFP

Sioux Falls, SD

Past-President

[Dennie Mann](#)

Retired Professional

Piedmont, SD

Board Member

[Carter Sergeant](#)

Pheasants Forever

Sioux Falls, SD

President-Elect

[Amanda Cheeseman](#)

SDSU

Brookings, SD

Board Member

[Kirsten Engeseth](#)

SDSU

Brookings, SD

Grant Opportunities



The South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society offers a Student Travel Grant to help pay for attending a national or state TWS Annual Conference. The Chapter also offers a Student Membership Sponsorship Grant which will cover student annual dues for membership into TWS if you are a student board member of a Student Chapter of TWS in South Dakota. For more information of how to apply for either grant, click [here](#).



SDTWS Life Members

Doug Alvine	Tony Leif	James Headley
Galen Burgett	John Leisner	Paul Mammenga
Eddie Childers	Jesse Lisburg	Silka Kempema
Mary Clawson	Kevin Luebke	Julie DeJong
Charles Dieter	Carl Madsen	Larry Gigliotti
Lester Flake	Will Morlock	Paul Coughlin
Kurt Forman	Glenn Moravek	Shelly Deisch
Andy Gabbert	Jay Peterson	Chuck Berdan
Dave Gilbert	Erling Podoll	Eric Pullis
Steve Griffin	Chuck Pyle	Owen McElroy
Troy Grovenburg	Greg Schenbeck	Randy Meidinger
Bob Hodorff	Boyd Schulz	Drew Davis
Harris Hoistad	Steve Spawn	Tom Kirschenmann
Earl Hyink	Cara Staab	Michael Gutzmer
Warren Jackson	Dave Steffen	Bruce Toay
Jonathan Jenks	Eileen Stukel	Josh Stafford
John Kelley	Joel Tigner	Brian Pauly
Colleen Kolbeck	Tom Tornow	Kristel Bakker
Rolf Kraft	Ralph Town	Dennie Mann
Thomas Kuck	Spencer Vaa	Philip Urso
Scott Larson	William Walker	Mary Ann Mann
Thomas LeFaive	Dave Azure	

Life Membership dues are prorated by age as follows:

Age 20 to 35: $25 \times \text{annual dues}$ ($\$10 \times 25 = \250)

Age 36 to 45: $20 \times \text{annual dues}$ ($\$10 \times 20 = \200)

Age 46 to 65: $17.5 \times \text{annual dues}$ ($\$10 \times 17.5 = \175)

Age 66 to 75: $12.5 \times \text{annual dues}$ ($\$10 \times 12.5 = \125)

Age 76 and over: Free

For More Information, Contact Chuck Pyle (605) 353-5753.

SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER OF TWS

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

REPRESENTATIVES:

Northern Great Plains Working Group, Representative: Rocco Murano

Central Mountains & Plains Representative: Corey Huxoll

STANDING COMMITTEES

Audit Past-President, Dennie Mann

Awards Nathan Baker

Conservation Review Mark Norton

Education and Information **VACANT**

Membership Chuck Pyle

Nominations and Elections President, William "Bill" Severud

Program President Elect, Amanda Cheeseman

Resolutions and Public Statements **VACANT**

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Arrangements President Elect, Amanda Cheeseman

Certification: Eileen Dowd Stukel

Chapter History Corey Huxoll

Energy Committee Kent (KC) Jensen

Fundraising **VACANT**

Grasslands & Wetland Issues: Randy Meidinger

Newsletter Jennifer Briggs

Public Lands Management **VACANT**

Tribal Fish and Wildlife: Mike Gutzmer

Wildlife Diseases Steve Griffin

Wildlife Diversity Silka Kempema



**THE
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SOCIETY**

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Founded in 1937 as The Society of Wildlife Specialists, The Wildlife Society has evolved into an international nonprofit organization of professional wildlife ecologists and managers. Members number over 10,000 from 40 different countries, and include administrators, biologists, conservation officers, educators, managers and researchers.

The objectives of TWS are to:

1. Promote sound stewardship of wildlife resources and the environments upon which wildlife and humans depend;
2. Undertake an active role in preventing human-induced environmental degradation;
3. Increase awareness and appreciation of wildlife values; and
4. To seek the highest standards in all activities of the wildlife profession.



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SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER

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CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

The South Dakota Chapter of TWS (SDTWS) was initiated on February 19, 1966 with 56 charter members. SDTWS is affiliated with the Central Mountains and Plains Section, one of eight subdivisions of TWS. The full membership of SDTWS meets annually in the spring to exchange scientific information through presented papers, debate current issues in wildlife management and land use, and conduct chapter business. The chapter's Executive Board of Directors, consisting of President, Past President, President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and two standing board members meet at least 4 times each year to discuss issues that don not require full chapter approval. The chapter also communicates with its members through a newsletter, ***The Prairie Voice***, published within 30 days of Executive Board meetings. SDTWS has a current membership of 171 people interested in the welfare of South Dakota wildlife.

The South Dakota Chapter TWS Objectives are:

- To develop and promote sound stewardship of wildlife resources and of the environment upon which wildlife and humans depend.
- To undertake an active role in preventing human-induced environmental degradation.
- To increase awareness and appreciation of wildlife values.
- To seek the highest standards in all activities of the wildlife profession.

To aid in the achievement of these objectives, the South Dakota Chapter proposes to:

- Provide opportunities for better liaison among individual members, their Section, and The Society.
- Evaluate and respond to the principles involved in proposed or enacted societal actions that could affect wildlife or its habitats.
- Recognize and commend outstanding professional achievements in maintenance, restoration and enhancement of habitats for wildlife.
- Focus the aims and objectives of The Society and the Central Mountains and Plains Section upon professional wildlife needs, problems, and events in local situations.
- Encourage communication between members and nonmembers to facilitate understanding and effectiveness of research and management of wildlife resources.
- Evaluate the principles involved in proposed or enacted public or private actions that could affect wildlife and to make these evaluations known to the public and public officials.

SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER OF THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Application for Membership/Renewal

Click [Here](#) for online membership renewal & to join SDTWS

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone (indicate home or work) _____
E-mail address (for newsletter delivery) _____
Employer: _____

Please note:

SDTWS's newsletter, A Prairie Voice, is all electronic. Therefore, an email 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). Email is also the typical mode of communication concerning other SDTWS news.

Please check one: _____ New Member _____ Renewing Member

*If you did not renew your dues in 2026, you will be considered a new member in 2027 as per the SDTWS Bylaws.

Please check box:

By becoming a member of SD TWS, I support the Chapter's bylaws and objectives:

- To develop and promote sound stewardship of wildlife resources and of the environment upon which wildlife and humans depend.
- To undertake an active role in preventing human-induced environmental degradation.
- To increase awareness and appreciation of wildlife values.
- To seek the highest standards in all activities of the wildlife profession.

Send the completed application/renewal form and a check for \$20.00 (regular), \$6.00 (student) to:

Julie Lindstrom
320 W 4th St
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Regular Dues: \$20.00

Student Dues: \$6.00

Life Membership dues are prorated by age as follows:

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

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

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

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

Age 76 and over: Free

For more information on becoming a life member, contact Chuck Pyle (605) 353-5753.