

President's Report –

Welcome to the best time of the year! Just a few things to cover with this report:

Our rendezvous on September 11th at the Larimore Dam Campground was a huge success. The day was beautiful as well as the location. Everything from the demonstrations, food, auction, meeting, and just the time to visit was awesome. Sincere appreciation to Bob Lee, Nat Bornsen, Phil Mastrangelo, Chris Tischaefter, Tim Fiebiger, and everyone who attended or donated for the day!

Fur harvester education classes and public education opportunities continue to be a big hit and very well attended. That is testimony to the quality of our program. Every course, regardless of where they are, requires a great deal of hard work and volunteer time, fuel, and expenses to make them happen. Thanks to the instructors and volunteers that helped make the difference – know that our future is better for your sacrifices and effort.

If you'd like to donate one or more carcass animals from trapping season this year, we've got a use for them. The animals will be used in future fur harvester education classes and fur handling events. Animals should be in good condition and preferably double bagged, compressed, and frozen. Pelt donations are always welcome and are a huge benefit to our education program. Some are tanned to compliment collections used for education or sold through Fur Harvesters Auctions. Those returns are dedicated to our education program.

The association elections will be held at our annual meeting this winter. The President and Treasurer (Phil Mastrangelo) positions are open for the general membership election; and District 2 (Bob Lee) and District 4 (Kyle Krebs) Director nominations are open for those respective districts. Nominations should be sent to: NDFHTA, POB 334, Butte, ND 58723 or to me by e-mail. Check with your nominee to make sure they are interested in seeking election or re-election. Nominations for President and Treasurer can come from the general membership - nominations for the director positions must come from a member in the respective district. Nominations are due by December 31, 2021. Ballots will be included in the winter issue of the *Dakota Skinner*.

If you have any ideas for the winter meet, please pass them along to your district director. If there is something you'd like to see or do while there, please let us know. It's your winter meet, let's make it the best one yet!

We're in the middle of the best time of the year. Take the time to be prepared, both mentally and physically, and have your equipment ready to perform as needed. You need to be a risk manager on your trap line every day of every season. Risk management is weighing what is good and productive against what

is bad and would be unproductive. Being in the news or appearing on a newspaper headline with an incident that has a negative impact on what we do would be a risk. You are in charge; you are responsible; and what you do affects us all. Using risk management won't control everything, but it will control what we can control. Know what risk is; assess your line for risk every day; and do everything to avoid risk. If we all use risk management, we should have a very uneventful yet rewarding season.

Some things to keep in mind as the trapping seasons approach –

- Remember to have your written permission and have it with you;
- Keep your sets away from domestic animal or human contact;
- Save time by marking your trails, runs, and set locations while out hunting or scouting;
- Run your line in both directions – you'd be surprised at what you missed from the other direction;
- Check, check, and check your traps and equipment so it's serviceable and in top condition;
- Animal welfare deserves the highest priority – use the appropriate equipment and be timely with your trap checks;
- Work with your wildlife and fisheries managers, conservation wardens, and report violations.
- When working on private property, make sure the land is posted.

The gauge of a professional trapper is not who traps the most, handles more animals, or who has been trapping the longest. A professional trapper is a trapper who obeys the laws, shares their knowledge, continues to improve themselves through education, and serves to promote the activity by being responsible and ethical.

Thank a Veteran for the freedoms we enjoy. Appreciate your time in the field and share your experiences. Remember to keep your membership current so you stay informed. Until next time, take care and be safe. Respectfully, Rick