

Greater Dacotah Chapter 1st Quarter Newsletter 2026

- Greater Dacotah Chapter-Safari Club International-Safari Club International Foundation
 - **Statement of accomplishments for the organization or group, focusing on the most recent 3 years:**

South Dakota Game Fish and Parks Shooting and Education Complex

<https://gfp.sd.gov/south-dakota-shooting-sports-complex/>

The Chapter has funded a total of \$100,000 for the SD Game Fish and Parks Shooting Complex and Education Center north of Rapid City located on 480 acres. In addition, the Chapter submitted a grant proposal in the amount of \$100,000 from the Safari Club International Foundation and awarded that to SDGFP. GDC is the number two wildlife and conservation NGO funding partners in the country.

The complex, located about ten miles north of Rapid City, is one of the largest public shooting ranges in the nation. It includes rifle, pistol, shotgun, and archery ranges, and will host recreational shooters, safety programs, marksmanship competitions, and law enforcement training. South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks' Rapid City Firearms Range Complex will be the premier firearms range complex in the region. Four hundred eighty acres of rolling topography, solitude and natural beauty offer the perfect site for sporting enthusiasts within minutes from Rapid City.

Organized in two separate areas (north and south), the complex offers a wider variety of options for all levels of hunters and recreational shooters and for law enforcement training. Designed with safety in mind, the range complex will offer people and families of all ages a world class opportunity to participate in shooting sports. There is room for beginners and experts to shoot side by side with facilities for education, outreach, and organized shooting competitions.

PROJECT GOALS

Providing a safe, designated place for people to go. Created one complex that provides all amenities. Designing a complex that feels convenient, safe, and easy to use - just minutes from town. Provide an organized range layout. Construction of a range that supports the R3 efforts: To recruit, retain, and reactivate outdoor enthusiasts. To build a community partnership project. As of 2020, firearms represented 59.9% of all U.S. consumer sales obligated to pay into the Wildlife Restoration program. The other sources are ammunition (33.9% of taxable sales) and archery products (6.2%). PR funding now supplies over one billion dollars a year for terrestrial management and research projects to state wildlife agencies! In addition, 1 billion dollars each year from hunting license sales, and another half a billion dollars from wildlife NGOs to provide project dollars in the management of terrestrial resources, access programs, hunter education programs.



Wildlife Management and Research Projects

RESOURCE SELECTION AND POPULATION PERFORMANCE OF MULE DEER AND WHITE-TAIL DEER IN HETEROGENIOUS LANDSCAPES: Limited information exists regarding resource selection for both mule deer and white-tailed deer throughout South Dakota. Resource availability is not uniform in nature and therefore, use may change as the availability of resources changes. Selection occurs when resources are used disproportionately to their availability (Manly et al. 2002). White-tailed deer and mule deer select and use resources that satisfy life requirements and if these suitable resources are not available, survival and recruitment may be affected (Fagen 1988). When animals cannot substitute resource quantity for more quality and vice versa, animal use changes as population density changes. To predict these changes, we must thoroughly understand the relationships that influence animal distribution and performance. Project funding \$5000 through SDGFP to the University of Montana, Professor Paul Lukacs project leader.

MULE DEER AND WHITE-TAILED DEER FAWN SURVIVAL AND SPATIOTEMPORAL DYNAMICS IN SYMPATRIC AND ALLOPATRIC POPULATIONS IN SOUTH DAKOTA: This study examines mule deer and white-tailed deer dynamics in areas of Sympatric (overlapping ranges) and allopatric (separate ranges), focusing on the most critical life stage in a mule deer's lifespan: birth through the first biological year. During this period, fawns face numerous challenges, including predation, forage acquisition, and the need for substantial growth to survive their first winter (Holland et al., 2024). The majority of mule deer range in South Dakota overlaps with white-tailed deer range (Lindbloom et al., 2023), raising key questions about interspecific competition. Specifically, we seek to investigate survival rates, competition for resources, foraging energetics, home range size, and frequency of stress related behaviors. Addressing these questions is important for informing future management decisions. Project Funding \$6500, through South Dakota State University, Professor William Severud project leader.

After birth, a fawn will instinctively hide in the short-grass prairies of western South Dakota, camouflaged and out of sight from predators. But 140 feet in the sky, [Helen Krueger](#), a graduate research assistant in South Dakota State University's [Department of Natural Resource](#)

[Management](#), observes the newborn deer through the lens of a thermal camera attached to a remote-controlled drone. After tracking the fawn's location, Krueger and her team of researchers use coordinates to find the deer's hiding spot. Once there, they blindfold the fawn and attach a GPS collar around its neck.

This work is part of a new project led by SDSU assistant professor [William Severud](#), an expert in wildlife ecology and a certified wildlife biologist. In collaboration with South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, Severud and Krueger are conducting research to better understand South Dakota's mule and white-tailed deer populations.



Habitat Projects



These were the only three projects that we received funding requests from over the last three years and funded the amounts requested. Please see the last page for additional funding for wildlife and habitat projects over the last 18 years. Over the last three years the GFP/PLS Shooting Complex and Training Center has received most of our financial support. The Chater will continue support for this facility but will also have additional funding for habitat and wildlife management and research projects with conservation NGOs, SDGFP, and SDSU.

In 2026 the Chapter received the highest national honor, which is the Diamond Conservation Award from SCIF for work with state wildlife agencies, universities, and NGOs funding wildlife and habitat conservation projects. As you will see this Chapter has contributed 67% of net revenue to SD GFP and SDSU for terrestrial research and management over the last eighteen years. One of the main reasons funding the shooting and education complex over the last three years is because of the PR funds generated from recreational and competitive shooting. Today 80% of this funding comes from these two groups. South Dakota and Wyoming have the highest number of resident hunters of any state in the nation both at about 27% of their population purchases hunting licenses.

Sponsorships Past Three Years

SD Chapter of The Wildlife Society-\$3500

South Dakota Youth Hunting Adventures-\$10,500

South Dakota Game Fish and Parks donation for the Long Valley Youth Coyote Hunt-\$700

South Dakota Game Fish and Parks Midwest Wildlife Conference-\$600

Sportsmen Against Hunger-\$2000

Rapid City High School Regulators Trap Team-\$2500

4-H Hunting Skills-\$750

GDC-SCI is proud to have six of their board members selected for the SDTWS and CMPS Citizen Conservation Awards & Wildlife Professional Awards over the last 15 years!

Links to organization or groups website or social media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/greaterdacotahchaptersci/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/greaterdacotah/>

GDC Website: <https://greaterdacotahchapter-sci.org/main/>



ADDITIONAL PROJECT FUNDING INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Greater Dacotah Chapter Safari Club International

Putting YOUR Contribution to Work in the Community and the World

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Project Funding</u>	<u>Total Funding</u>
1 SD Game Fish and Parks		\$ 782,171.00
Mountain Goat Projects	\$ 8,000.00	
Big Horn Sheep Projects	\$ 68,675.00	
Protocol for Monitoring Grasslands in the Black Hills	\$ 19,600.00	
GFP Parks and Wildlife Foundation Project Funding Source	\$ 8,650.00	
Cooper GPA Water Project	\$ 5,000.00	
Outdoor Campus - West	\$ 20,000.00	
Habitat/Access Enhancement Project	\$ 28,375.00	
Law Enforcement	\$ 2,395.00	
Shooting Complex - GDC and SCIF	\$ 189,476.00	
Matching Pittman Robertson Grants for Wildlife Restoration	\$ 432,000.00	
2 South Dakota State University Graduate Research Projects		\$ 27,987.00
Pronghorn Antelope Fawn mortality - Radio Collars - Refurbished - Telonics	\$ 2,262.00	
Mountain Lions Tracking - Telonics, Mountain Lion Kitten Collars & ear Tags	\$ 6,625.00	
Bobcat Radio Collars	\$ 2,600.00	
Mule Deer Research Projects	\$ 16,500.00	
3 South Dakota Wildlife Federation Camp		\$ 9,425.00
4 Safari Club International American Wilderness Leadership School		\$ 19,186.00
5 Black Hills Conservation Initiative in Conjunction with RMEF		\$ 10,000.00
6 Other NGO Habitat and Wildlife		\$ 2,500.00
7 South Dakota Youth Hunting Adventures		\$ 72,986.00
8 Blue Bag Program		\$ 1,500.00
9 Sportsmen Against Hunger		\$ 19,290.00
10 The Wildlife Society		\$ 6,075.00
11 Namibia, Africa - Kudu Mobility Study		\$ 2,600.00
12 Mozambique Water Project		\$ 7,500.00
13 Safari Cares		\$ 1,200.00
14 Sun Catchers Therapeutic Riding Academy		\$ 2,600.00
15 Wounded Warrior Program		\$ 1,300.00
16 Care for Zumbo		\$ 12,900.00
17 SCI National - Regional and Global Conservation Programs		\$ 170,223.00
Hunter Defense Fund, SCI-OAC, Education Initiatives		
18 Black Hills Raptor Center		\$ 13,000.00
19 Humanitarian & Community Outreach - Project Funding		\$ 11,733.00
20 Hunter/Shooter Education, Competitive Shooting, Range Development		\$ 53,050.00
Total thru January 17, 2026		\$ 1,227,226.00



**OVER THE PAST 18 YEARS, YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS
HAVE FUNDED THE ABOVE ACTIVITIES FOR A
TOTAL OF \$1,227,226.00**

THE GREATER DACOTAH CHAPTER IS DEDICATED TO SCIENTIFIC WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS THAT PRACTICE THIS FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPT IN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DECISIONS!

The Greater Decotah Chapter achieved the 2026 Diamond Conservation Award for outreach efforts with South Dakota State University and South Dakota Game Fish and Parks. This award recognizes the projects that were funded for research and management opportunities in South Dakota. President Gary English accepted the award at the SCI National Conference in Nashville. Gary and his family, Christie and Luke, all attended the conference representing the Chapter, our hunt donors, and Safari Club International.



In addition to the conservation award one-week later Gary received the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society Citizen Conservation Award at the TWS Conference at South Dakota State University, Dennie Mann President of SDTWS presented the award. In 2027 Gary will also be considered for the Central Mountains & Plains Section award (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah)



Dennie Mann past president of GDC and current board member has served three terms as president of the South Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Presenting the recognition plaque for past president is SDSU Professor William Severud incoming president for the South Dakota Chapter of TWS. Dennie has been part of TWS for 40 years, serving as president and chairing the Public Lands and Fund-Raising committees for three decades.



Brett Brandli just returned from a wolf hunt “Alberta Outfitters” with Jim Mercier. Sportsmen hunting other big game often take Wolves as an incidental species. There is, however, growing recognition that the Wolf is a magnificent trophy in its own rite, and as such there is increasing interest in hunting them in Alberta.

Wolf populations are high throughout the boreal, foothills, and mountain regions of Alberta. Alberta wolves weigh up to 120 pounds and range in color from light gray to black. The pelt of an Alberta Wolf, taken in its winter prime, is a beautiful reminder of a great hunt for this shy and rarely seen trophy. Brett had a great hunt and took a magnificent trophy in Northern Alberta. Brett is a past board member of the Greater Dacotah Chapter and hunts across the globe, but North America provides him with the most opportunities. Congratulations on an awesome hunt!



North America provides unlimited opportunities for hunting trophy big game species, and the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation leads the world in providing funding for wildlife management, research, and enforcement to protect and enhance our wildlife populations for sustainable use and viewing opportunities.



The front range of the Wyoming Tetons four images giving you a seamless panoramic view

Thanks for your continued support for the SCI Greater Dacotah Chapter efforts advocating for science-based management and hunting opportunity.

Mary Ann & Dennie Mann