

Nancy Hilding
President, Prairie Hills Audubon Society
February 28th, 2026

Dear supporters of wildlife,

Prairie Hills Audubon Society has been working to terminate the Nest Predator Bounty Program since it's inception in 2019. This was created due to a campaign promise of Kristi Noem. It offers bounties for killing 5 meso predators, alleging this killing, increases ground nesting birds nesting success (but it doesn't).

Senator Reed (District 7) offered SB 148 in the SD legislative session, , which would have terminated the Nest Predator Bounty Program (NPBP), The Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee (SANRC) voted unanimously to to kill it. Before that vote they had been considering an amendment to 1) cut it's funding in half to a quarter million per year, 2. restrict the recipients of the bounties to minors (under 18) 3) limit total bounty award per minor to \$250. The SDGFP convinced them not to have that amendment, so they decided instead to send a letter asking the Commission to decide to do this, — this was not a resolution, it was not a bill, just a letter from 7 out of 100 legislators, who sit on a key committee that handles most of the bills that effect SD GFP.

As of 1:00 on Friday SDGFP had not received this letter. I have asked for a copy of it and have not received it either. I personally don't think SDGFP Commission will pass a resolution on 3/5 or 3/6 to undo their Jan 2023 approval of the NPBP for the next four years, because they get a letter from the SANRC. To reflect that prospect, the SDGFP has the NPBP on the agenda as an "information item" not an "action item". But things can change - link to agenda with zoom codes. https://gfp.sd.gov/UserDocs/nav/Commission_Agenda_-_March_5-6_Public.pdf

Opponents of the NPBP are not united in feelings about the SANRC recommendation. Everyone opposed it as a bill that locked the NPBP in, as an annual requirement in statute, but some are happy that as a Commission resolution, half as many animals would die but others are scandalized that our society will continue the program, while prioritize teaching children animal cruelty and lies about wildlife management.

However as the SDGFPC will at least get a report about the SANRC opinion on the NPBP, on March 5th or 6th, we ask that people send in a comment against the NPBP by Sunday night midnight CT. <https://gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions/> That is their written comment deadline, late comments are moved to the April public comment pile. As the press normally covers these meetings, we hope that some people testify against the NPBP or teaching cruelty/misinformation to children. Open Forum is after 2 pm CT on Thursday - 3 minutes of testimony is allowed by Zoom or in person (see Zoom links in agenda).

SD has a 3 and a partial day trap check time west river and 2 and a partial day trap check time east river. That is how frequently they must check traps during breeding season, when wildlife moms are separated from kids.

The Commission will also be voting on GFP's Wildlife Damage Management Action Plan, which is also a matter of concern. https://gfp.sd.gov/UserDocs/nav/2026_WDM_Action_Plan.pdf

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